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VALUES, ISSUES AND CONCERNS

IDENTIFIED BY RESIDENTS OF THE CALIFORNIA DESERT

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INTRODUCTION

"I like the desert. You got your sun. You got your clean air. You got your rocks and sand. I don't know. It just gets in your blood."

The values of the desert resident escape stereotyping. Some people living in the desert prefer to remain isolated from all its virtues except those of sun and clean air. Others may know hundreds of square miles surrounding them as well as a city dweller knows his own block. Besides as a home, a person living in the desert may perceive it variously as a provider, a climate, a classroom, a playground, or simply a vista.

The increasing state and national appetites for the California desert's resources have fostered the age of long-term, comprehensive desert management. With fully one-half of the California Desert Conservation Area under Bureau of Land Management jurisdiction, the desert resident finds the disposition of his environment is a national decision.

Public opinion has been assessed by national, state, and desert field polls. A small part of the national constituency deciding the fate of desert public lands, many desert people have avidly used the avenues of public participation opened for the decision process. In letters and the forums of public meetings, particularly those of the Desert Advisory Committee, they avow that they are the experts, as well as the prime beneficiaries, or victims, of proposed management. "Who cares what someone in Brooklyn wants done to the desert?"

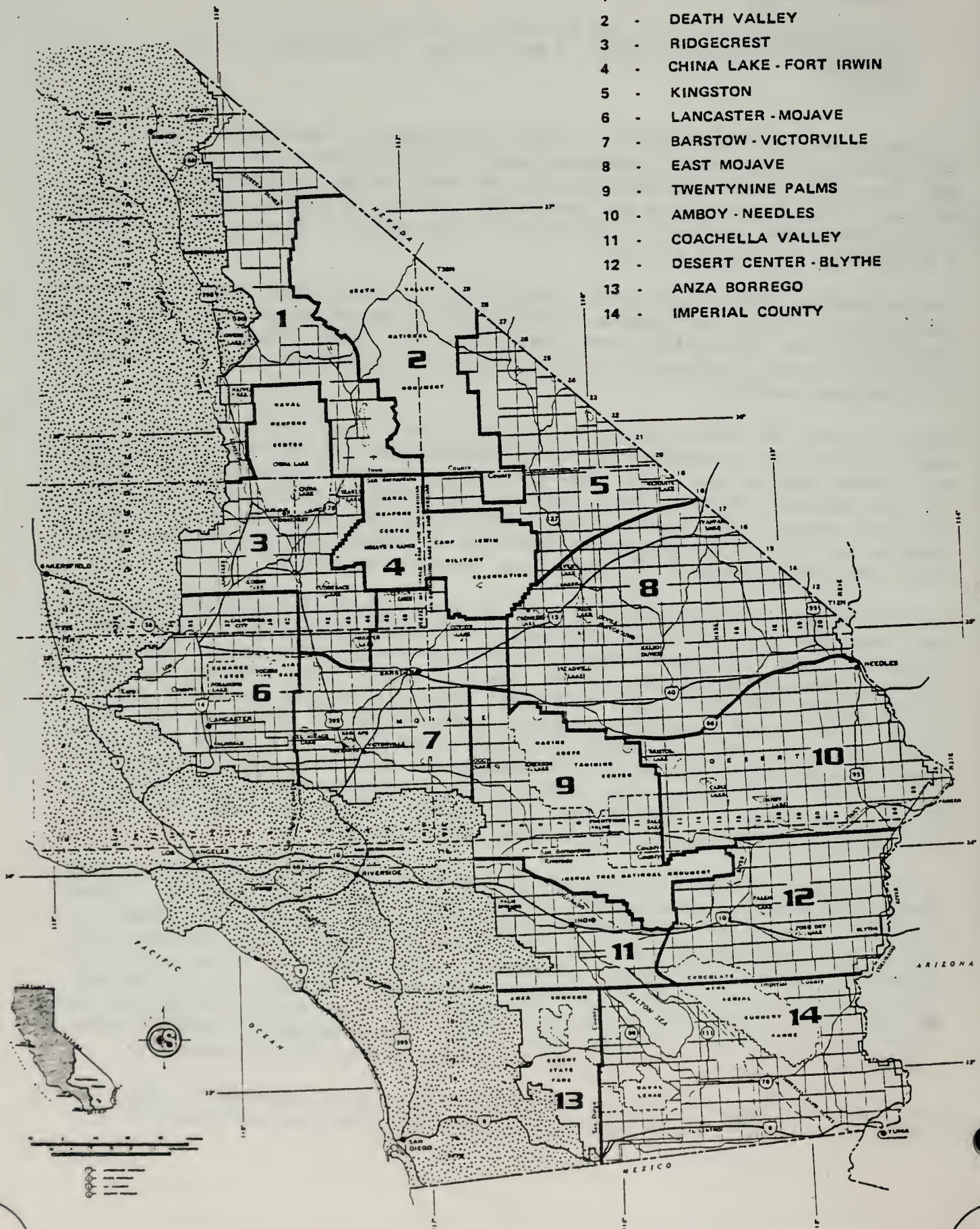
To add dimension to the values revealed in statistically weighed responses, position papers, and prepared statements, BLM staff visited nearly every town and city in the desert and talked to almost 600 people about desert issues. In relaxed, informal situations, desert residents talked about why they had come to the desert, the ways they used it, and their visions for a pleasant future there. Traditional community spokesmen, including mayors and other city officials, newspaper editors, chamber of commerce managers, and service club presidents, volunteered assessments of community, as well as personal, values in conversations that lasted a few minutes or a few hours, depending on their knowledge or interest. Many people recommended "someone you should talk to," a person keenly sensitive to local needs and interests.

In this report residents' values are presented in this community context. Communities have been organized into "Market Areas," units devised by SRI, International, as distinct, economically-related areas in the California desert, (see map). This method complements the field surveys by viewing the resident as a community member as well as an individual, and allows him to voice special concerns restricted by the format of the questionnaire. Lacking the statistical virtues of the formal poll, it has the strength of highlighting the diverse and often complex nature of desert social values. The remainder of this introduction summarizes the range of viewpoints encountered on some desert issues.

One readily apparent value is a distrust and dislike of government. While hardly unique to the desert, this value is particularly strong in many areas of it,

CALIFORNIA DESERT CONSERVATION AREA MARKET AREAS

- 1 - EUREKA - SALINE - PANAMINT
- 2 - DEATH VALLEY
- 3 - RIDGECREST
- 4 - CHINA LAKE - FORT IRWIN
- 5 - KINGSTON
- 6 - LANCASTER - MOJAVE
- 7 - BARSTOW - VICTORVILLE
- 8 - EAST MOJAVE
- 9 - TWENTYNINE PALMS
- 10 - AMBOY - NEEDLES
- 11 - COACHELLA VALLEY
- 12 - DESERT CENTER - BLYTHE
- 13 - ANZA BORREGO
- 14 - IMPERIAL COUNTY



especially rural ones. The advent of the government agent--from the county inspector who critically eyes casually fashioned houses to the BLM staff fencing and posting the formerly open spaces--is considered by many as a threat both to livelihood and to one of the most cherished desert virtues--privacy. The Bureau of Reclamation, with its proposed "160 acre limitation" on farm size, is reviled by the communities of the Imperial and lower Coachella valleys. Some recent immigrants to cities like Lancaster have fled government action like court-ordered busing and are uneasy at what forms desert management might take. The Los Angeles Department of Water and Power is despised in areas near Owens Valley because of water acquisition tactics. In the desert portions of Inyo County, "it is the BLM that tops our list". Residents of Red Mountain, Barstow and many other desert towns would agree. Miners and grazers worry about staff with "too much book learning and not enough common sense". "We like the desert just the way it is," many say, or "The best thing BLM can do for the desert is get out of it."

Challenging government as a disturber of peace and privacy are increasing numbers of metropolitan area recreationists who have "discovered" the desert, and cause in many areas an "outsider vs. insider" conflict. While the visitor from the city is nearly always conceded the right to escape occasionally from urban woes ("I wouldn't want anyone to suffer like that all the time"), many would prefer that they come in smaller numbers, or leave home those who shoot cows and buildings dump trash, tear down fences, destroy roads, plants and wildlife, and leave a persisting memory of din after they have gone. People living in Johnson Valley, Hesperia, and El Mirage would testify to this, but the vandal, the trespasser, and the litterer are desert-wide villains. Some believe they are the result of poor vehicle management by BLM; others see a chaotic situation that they will suffer the presence of government to control. There are those who, like the miners of Randsburg and some ranchers of the east Mojave, would prefer to "take care of it ourselves."

Sometimes the sufferance of the outsider yields an income. Vehicle recreationists are not only important to the economy of areas like Barstow and Glamis, but many residents come to appreciate the considerate behavior and good spirits of the organized groups and question just where the desert offender comes from. The "Glamis Theory," detailed in the Market Area Fourteen Report, indicts the desert resident as the litterer of that area, rather than the visitor.

The dilemma of government control versus the problems of outsiders is compounded by the high value many desert residents put on their own recreational vehicle activity. In Imperial County, for example, many feel that the outlet of energies a dirt bike provides local youth keeps them from turning to drug use or other crimes. Rockhounds, hunters, "four-wheelers", dirt bikers, amateur archaeologists, historians, zoologists, geologists and botanists all fear the degradation of the desert environment, but many don't feel their own careful use should be curtailed because of the offense of the outsider, often stereotyped as a young L.A. motorcyclist. Patrolling the vast desert area seems fruitless to many, "pouring money down a rathole." BLM education of outsiders in desert recreational manners is an expenditure preferred to enforcement by some desert residents.

Another component of the vehicle management problem is the diversity of viewpoints on the resiliency of the desert's terrain and wildlife. Whether the

desert is fragile or hardy is a point even long time residents split on, depending on the type of terrain, plant or animal wildlife being discussed. This appraisal and the aforesaid values determine the resident's attitude toward a host of desert issues, culminating in the highly charged one of wilderness designations. Affecting not only the gamut of desert recreational uses, but also some forms of traditional human essay. Across the desert there are people who believe the legal definition of wilderness undermines the American impulse of enterprise. "It's all right to think of preservation, but you've got to be practical." Some people working small mines believe wilderness designation is the core of the government's plan to "starve them out." The phrase "fear of wilderness" has acquired a modern meaning in the context of desert management, and can be applied to most rural areas in the California Desert Conservation Area.

If privacy and self-reliance are hallmark values of the rural desert resident, the fear of urbanization shapes the concerns of many living in the desert's cities, especially those like Yucca Valley or Palm Desert, where heavy growth is eroding the small town virtues many value. Some towns, like Hesperia, must deal with the paradox of accomodating the refugee from "down below" who, once entrenched, opposes the traditional drum beating growth-spirit of the local chamber of commerce. "I kind of want the door shut behind me," is a common sentiment. Other towns struggle to maintain a rural identity against the onslaught of resort and retirement developments, which they derisively term "Palm Springs" or "Beverly Hills" copies. The retirement population of Palm Springs, itself, and of cities in Market Area Nine, is the old guard that effectively uses its leisure time to politically oppose what it perceives as encroachment on the small town ethic, beauty and healthful climate of their chosen areas. They support desert management that is protective, rather than use-oriented. The fear that wilderness designation will prevent the retiree from enjoying the desert is more often expressed on the behalf of the retiree than it is by the retiree himself: "Just because they've forgotten how to walk, doesn't mean I have."

This group is often joined in its sentiments by the young, educated workers attracted to work at places like the China Lake Naval Weapons Center, and both high and low income groups who lack the interest, or financial ability, to buy special vehicles for desert recreation and do not fear the loss of access that others do. Those whose main recreation is enjoyment of their vehicle in desert surroundings, consider these groups as another kind of "outsider".

Variations of the outsider-insider theme may occur within the same community or Market Area. Victor Valley, with mountain, river and city-centered recreational opportunities, displays different values than the desert recreation center of Barstow, only thirty miles north. Borrego Springs and Ocotillo Wells in Market Area Thirteen show a similar divergence. The values of the year-round miner population of Tecopa differ markedly from those of its "snowbird" population who enjoys the hot springs there each winter.

Special concerns will surface in some areas: burros in Market Area One, power-line corridors in Area Nine and grazing in Area Eight are examples. Sometimes the lack of nearby public lands creates an indifference to desert management issues, as in parts of Market Area Six. The kinds of issues, the stances towards them and the degree of passion they generate vary widely. If the desert resident sounds a common note, it is only that he wants to be in the desert, and to keep it the way he likes it.

MARKET AREA ONE

EUREKA - SALINE - PANAMINT

"What do I want to see done with the desert? Nothing. Leave it alone. We like it just the way it is."

A very small population lives in this Market Area compared to other desert Market Areas. Only about 1,000 people live in this valley and mountain range area found in the northern desert. Almost half of these people live in three communities. Olancho is the largest with approximately 300 people. The old town of Keeler has about 120 people and the canyon community of Homewood Canyon has about 100 residents. The Market Area's remaining population lives primarily in small communities that range in size from 10 to 70 people. There are probably about 100 people living in isolated settlements with less than ten people.

Many of the settlements got their start as mining communities, but today exist for other reasons. Communities along Highway 395 between Pearsonville and Olancho provide services for tourists (see map) and housing for government employees, ranchers, Sierra horse and mule packers and retired people.

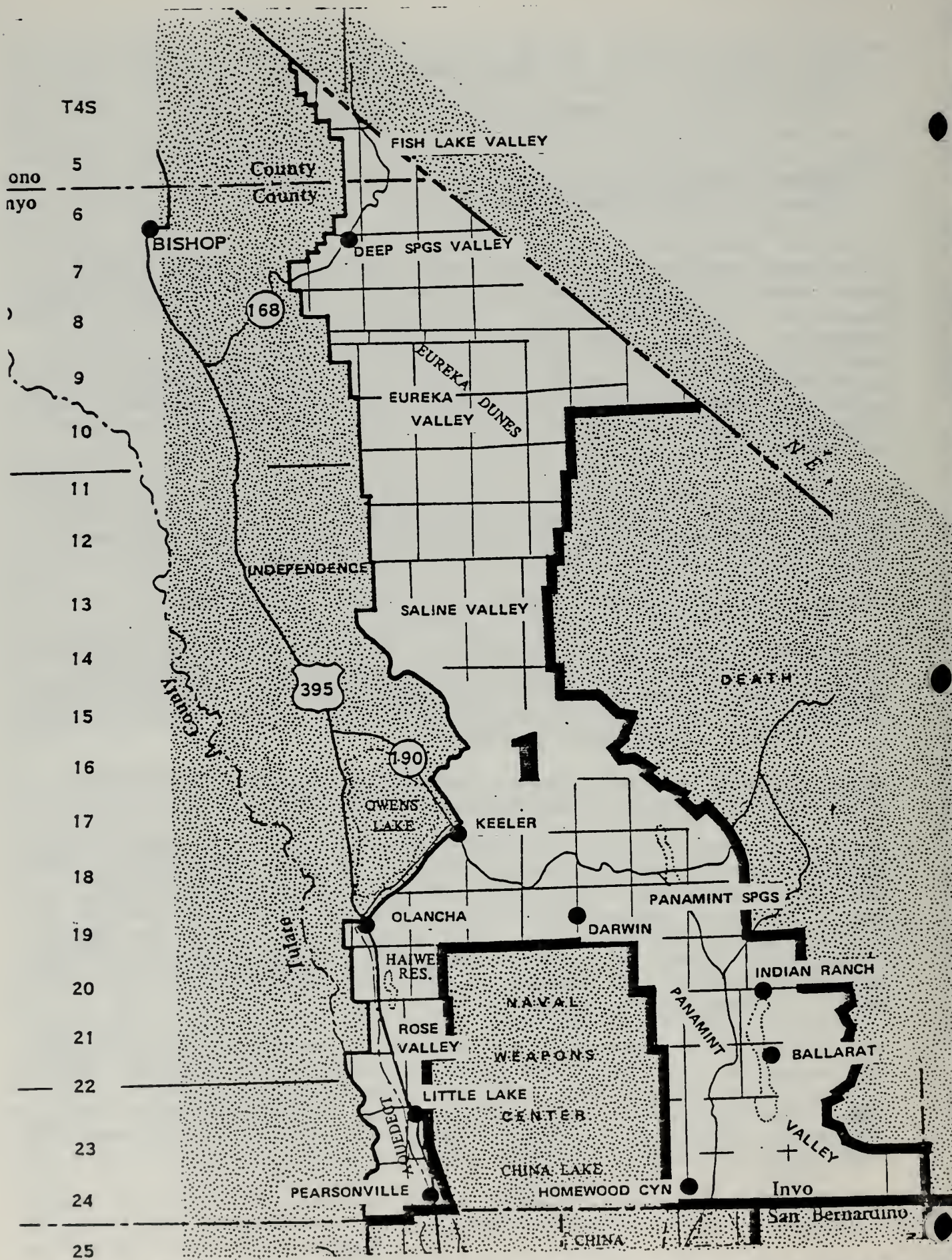
The people living in Homewood are either retired or work in Trona.

The occupation of agriculture is important in Rose Valley and Fishlake Valley, while mining is still the interest of many people who live in Saline and Panamint Valleys. These agriculture and mining areas contain only scattered dwellings, with the exception of Indian Ranch. This Panamint Valley settlement is a recreation and retirement community.

Road maintenance yards are located at Panamint Springs and in Deep Springs Valley and each employs and houses about four families.

Generally in this portion of the California Desert, people are comparatively older than the State average, because many are retired or semiretired. Government employees make up a significant portion of the employed population. Miners, cattlemen, farmers and people providing tourist services comprise most of the remaining employed people. There appears to be a significant number of people who are not employed or who only work intermittently. This lack of employment seems to be an accepted sacrifice that was made by some when they moved to a remote desert location.

The condition of the communities in this Market Area reflects the stable population and the older age of most of the buildings. Only in Homewood Canyon, Darwin, Olancho and Rose Valley are there a few newer dwelling units. Panamint Springs and Keeler are the only communities with abandoned buildings. Most of the area appears quite stable and the buildings seem maintained within the limited financial means of their owners.



EUREKA . SALINE . PANAMINT

ISSUES AND CONCERNS

"In Inyo County, people do not like government. In the Owens Valley it is because of Los Angeles Department of Water and Power, but out here it is the BLM who tops our list."

People who live in this Market Area indicated various reasons for living here but the most common value expressed is the private, peaceful life they can find. Other common values are the low cost of retirement living and the climate, which is conducive to their good health. Also many express their strong attachment to the natural beauty of the desert. Those reasons for living in the desert give significant meaning to the concerns raised by these Inyo and Mono County residents.

Two common concerns were expressed throughout the Market Area. One was that more intensive management programs by government agencies such as the Bureau of Land Management would destroy the desert residents' privacy, which is their primary satisfaction for living in the desert. Secondly, a great fear has developed that a wilderness designation would deny access for the desert residents to areas they have been enjoying for years. This fear of a wilderness designation has assumed dramatic proportions in this area both because of past experience with the Forest Service Wilderness Programs and because of the information they have received both directly and indirectly from the Bureau of Land Management wilderness meetings. Most people who spoke about wilderness felt that a wilderness designation was inappropriate for the desert because their view of wilderness is forests and areas of lush foliage--not "sand and rocks". Most people indicated that they wanted the desert left as it is. Those desert residents fear any wilderness designation, feeling it would "lock up" the desert. They do not see the need for any designation.

Yet, while many desert dwellers expressed concern over too much government control, many feel that some government control is needed to solve the problem of vandalism. Many showed concern about passing tourists shooting up and defacing structures in both recreation areas and in towns along the route to recreation areas.

Concern for burros and wild horses was shown repeatedly, ranging from the desire to see all burros and wild horses removed from the desert for either nuisance measures or humanitarian reasons, to the desire to feed and water the burros in order to ensure their continued existence.

A general agreement was expressed by residents in this market area that recreationists from large Southern California Metropolitan areas need to be able to use the desert both for recreational purposes, and to just get away from the crowded cities. But a conditional concern paralleled this sentiment in that the desert residents did not want a huge influx of metropolitan recreationists, for then their privacy and the beauty of the desert would be destroyed.

The desert residents also showed a fear that out of area residents misuse the desert by driving off of existing roads and trails, thereby scarring the land to a greater extent than necessary.

Dissatisfaction with past Bureau of Land Management action is repeatedly expressed. The shifting policies in the Eureka Sand Dunes of first opening half the area to recreational use and then closing down the entire area, and the inconsistent policies on proposed land exchanges with Los Angeles Water and Power have left desert residents confused and distrustful.

Basically the view of desert residents in the Eureka-Saline-Panamint Market Area is that the desert should be left alone; that wilderness designations in the desert are unnecessary; that any government control of activities in the desert except vandal control is unwanted; and that any type of change is looked on with dissatisfaction.

PEARSONVILLE AREA (pop. 50)

"395 is what is important to us."

The Pearsonville Area is made up of a few scattered settlements along Highway 395 and is bounded by Pearsonville and Midway. People living here are generally retired or work outside the area. The majority of working residents commute either to Ridgecrest, where most of the supplies and services are purchased for the area, or they commute to the saw mill a few miles north of Pearsonville. There is a gas station, a wrecking yard, an auto racetrack and two cafes that provide some local employment. Generally the area appears to be in poor condition with no signs of growth or development. The overall population has been fairly stable in number, although individuals are quite transient.

People living in this community have no strong concerns or issues with regard to public lands. There was the value to leave the desert as it is and some specific concern over motorcycle users going off the roads and changing the look of the desert. Knowledge of the BLM seems quite limited.

LITTLE LAKE (pop. 10-50)

"This place really gets lively when the truckers come in on weekends."

Little Lake is located along Highway 395 about 25 miles north of Inyokern. People living in Little Lake work at the gas station and hotel or are employed at the saw mill 6 miles to the south. The hotel is quite old, but is in good condition and is somewhat of a landmark to travelers on the State Highway. The tavern in the hotel is a meeting place for local residents and log truck drivers on weekends and seems to be an institution in itself. Highway travelers frequently gas up at the filling station and some tour buses stop at the motel for meals, giving the settlement a significant highway related economy.

There was a general fear of wilderness designation and its possible impact on tourism by limiting road access and resulting in a decreased use of the desert. Also the fear of wilderness designation preventing recreationists, such as rock hounders, from enjoying their sport was expressed. Concern was also shown about vandalism and the need for government control over vandals. No other specific areas of interest or concern were identified. The people of Little Lake have had very little contact with the BLM and therefore had very little to say about the agency, other than government in general is bad.

ROSE VALLEY (pop. 10)

"This is the perfect place to grow alfalfa."

Located halfway between Ridgecrest and Lone Pine, Rose Valley is a sparsely settled agricultural area. People living here mostly work on the 320 acre farm which has a primary crop of alfalfa. Other crops such as jojoba beans and pecan trees are being grown experimentally. The farm is quite modern, with mobile homes for living quarters and modern farm and irrigation equipment.

Rose Valley residents' main concern about the future of public lands stems from their desire to acquire more land for agriculture. They estimated that 2,000 acres of land could be developed with the water to which they had rights. Attitudes towards the geothermal potential in the Coso area were quite positive. There was a strong concern, though, about the proposed exchange of BLM land north of Rose Valley for land in the Alabama Hills owned by the Los Angeles Department of Water and Power (LAWP). Fears are that LAWP is attempting to force them out by getting their water. The only area of special concern is Fossil Falls, which they wanted left open for public use. Attitudes towards the BLM are quite positive, except in regard to their deals with LAWP, which "is like dealing with the devil himself".

OLANCHA (pop. 300)

"The trouble with the BLM is that they just don't know the desert as well as we do!"

Olancha is located at the south end of Owens Lake along Highway 395. Being situated at the base of the Sierra Nevada Mountains, this area has a beautiful setting which is important to its residents. Most of the population is comprised of government employees and retired people. Cattlemen and Sierra packers are an important social and economic segment of the community. Highway related merchants are the other major group found in the largest and most diverse community in the Market Area.

There are no special interest areas; people indicated they feel the whole desert is important. Unlike many other areas, there were no strong anti-government feelings expressed. However, some lack of respect for the BLM was indicated

because they felt the Bureau does not really know the public areas or its resources. Also, unlike other areas, there was a value in the community that would like to see wilderness designations, but only with multiple use allowances.

SALINE VALLEY (pop. 10-20)

"We are the ones who make this spring a nice clean place to come to--not the government."

This remote area has a population that ranges between 10 to 20 people. Its residents are primarily small miners and desert people. The latter group tends to be more intermittent in their use of Saline Valley and is found at Lower Warm Springs and as mine caretakers. This group also considers itself as small miners, although many people interviewed outside the Saline Valley would disagree.

Living conditions are harsh at best. Most dwelling units are quite primitive but completely self sufficient. Many have their own generator system. There are no power or communication lines, although some have Citizen Band Radios.

The values of the residents of the Valley seem consistent with the values of similar people found in the Market Area in that they dislike too much government control and want the desert left as it is. Specifically the people in the valley do not want any improvement of the road into the area. It is their opinion that the road's generally rough condition is what keeps the Valley remote and this is what they want. This value was strongly supported by most people in the county.

Burros in the Valley are not a concern of the people now living in Saline. Some people outside the Valley are getting alarmed at the burro population increase and want to see a reduction. Everyone in and out of the Valley felt burros should always be a part of Saline Valley.

Wilderness designation is something that no one in Saline Valley wants, if it closes roads and excludes the small miner. These people do have a deep concern about the protection of Saline Valley from developments for recreation, energy, or other purposes. They do not want change and would like a protective multiple use designation that allows mining.

The occupation of Lower Warm Springs by desert people is an issue with some Inyo County residents. The people now living there feel that they are valid small miners doing the government a service by maintaining and improving the warm springs at no cost to any taxpayer. On the other hand, some people outside the valley see these people as trespassers who are not legitimate miners and who are not paying their fair share of taxes. There is also some objection to the nudity that occurs although this concern is not as common as the tax issue. Another value expressed by Inyo County toward the Saline Valley residents is that these people are maintaining the spring better than it ever has been in the past and are causing no problem. This value holds that if the Bureau of Land Management were to remove them, some management program should be implemented to maintain the Warm Springs in its present condition.

The only specific improvement recommended for Saline Valley was by non-residents, a recognition by some that a toilet facility is needed near the Warm Springs.

DEEP SPRINGS VALLEY (pop. 70)

"We teach our students how to accept responsibility."

This isolated valley is one of the northern most portions of the California Desert. Most of the people living here are either students or faculty of Deep Springs College. The only other residents of the Valley live and work at the Road Maintenance Station. The college is about 40 years old and many of the buildings being used were built in the early years of the school, but are well maintained. Activities at the college include the grazing of cattle on BLM and Forest Service land.

The residents primary satisfaction from living in the Valley is isolation, so the general concern of keeping their privacy was strongly expressed. The college was also concerned about the need to preserve the land and therefore felt wilderness designation is needed. No special areas of interest or concern were mentioned in the Deep Springs Valley Area with the exception of the protection of the wild horses who live in the area.

MONO COUNTY (pop. 20)

"I'd like to talk to you, but I'm having dinner."

People who live in this northern tip of the California Desert are primarily farmers. Sparsely scattered dwellings are found in Fishlake Valley. Most of this valley extends across the California border into Nevada. The orientation of people's social and economic life is towards Nevada. Most people live in mobile homes in the valley.

No special interest areas were mentioned, but some general concerns were expressed. The area residents enjoy their isolation, and wish to be left alone; this includes a desire to see a decrease in government management control over the whole desert. Their greatest concern was for keeping their isolation, both from government agencies and from large numbers of tourists and recreationists.

KEELER (pop. 120)

"Things have not changed much since the flood back in the forties."

Being an old mining town located on the east side of Owen's Lake, Keeler still has a strong attachment to mining. About half the families in town have a

member working in mining. The other half of the town is retired. The major source of employment is a talc milling plant which has about 20 employees. Generally the condition of the buildings in Keeler appears poor, but the population has been quite stable over the years.

Keeler shares the general Market Area value of anti-government control except for control over vandals. Like many of the other communities with a high percentage of retired residents, Keeler shows concern about road closure that could be caused by a wilderness designation.

DARWIN (pop. 40-50)

"It is a quiet place and we like it that way."

Darwin is a retirement community located between the Panamint and Owens Valley. It is an old mining town which today has very little active mining activities. Overall, structures in the town looked in poor condition, but there were some signs of new development from retiring people moving here from other communities.

The people of Darwin express the general concern of the Market Area in a strong feeling against government control. They also have special areas of interest: Darwin Falls and China Gardens--where closed access to vehicles would severely limit the ability of older people to enjoy these sites.

INDIAN RANCH (pop. 10)

"We don't really leave the ranch much."

Indian Ranch is a retirement/recreation community located in the Panamint Valley. A combination bar/pool room/swimming pool provides local residents with recreation and is the only economic base at the site. Very few tourists come to Indian Ranch, and the people who live here enjoy the isolation. The condition of the ranch and trailer park appears fair.

Residents of the Ranch had no specific concerns about the general attitude shown in Market Area One that recreationists from outside the desert should be allowed to use the public lands in the desert.

PANAMINT VALLEY (pop. 15)

"I can't believe how the Government gives permits to these people to take out the burros."

The Panamint Valley is sparsely populated with independent miners and retired people. The people live here either for the isolation or because their mine

is in the area. The structures in Panamint Valley are for the most part in poor condition. Panamint Springs is such an example, having a look of total disrepair and desertion. The only example of good structural condition is seen in the Cal Trans Department Maintenance Station located outside Panamint Springs. The four dwellings at the Station are in extremely good condition.

There were no special concerns shown in the Panamint Valley. The miners exhibited the general attitude of dislike for government control, especially when such control entails the closing down of mines. The general belief was that the desert belongs to the people and should be used as the people wish with the exception of vandals. Most people in the Panamint Valley expressed a desire to see the continuance of the burro population as it now exists.

HOMEWOOD CANYON (pop. 100)

"I live here because it is so much cooler than Trona."

Homewood Canyon is located a few miles north of Trona. About fifty dwelling units are scattered throughout Homewood Canyon, with the nucleus settlement containing about thirty of those residences. The population is a combination of retired people and some young people that work in the mines in Trona. Besides employment, Trona provides all the services and supplies for Homewood Canyon.

Homewood is strictly a residential community with no services or economic base, yet, because of the high percentage of retired residents, the population is very stable. Buildings in the community appear to be in good condition.

The main reasons people chose to live in the Homewood Canyon are the peace and quiet, and a cooler climate than Trona.

The concerns expressed by Homewood Canyon residents coincide with the general concerns of the Market Area. Though special concern was expressed about the burro vs. dog issue in the Canyon, where some people feel there are too many burros, and use their dogs to keep the roaming burros out of gardens and off of water pipes. Other Canyon residents feel the burros should be protected from the dogs. Some are getting to the point where they want both the burros and dogs removed.

Because of the high percentage of older residents, special concern was also shown about wilderness designation cutting off road access to vehicles, thereby making it impossible for the older people to partake of recreation in the desert.

MARKET AREA THREE

THE RIDGECREST AREA

"I came here for a job, but I've really come to love this desert."

The Ridgecrest Market Area sits along the western border of the California Desert Conservation Area, covering portions of Inyo, Kern and San Bernardino counties. It contains some of the oldest settlements in the desert, which add a colorful addition to the Market Area's history. It also contains new communities that sprang to prominence in the last few decades, each adding their own element of color. Population centers are Ridgecrest (14,000) and Trona (5,000). Cantil, Inyokern, Johannesburg, Red Mountain and Randsburg all have 500 or less people.

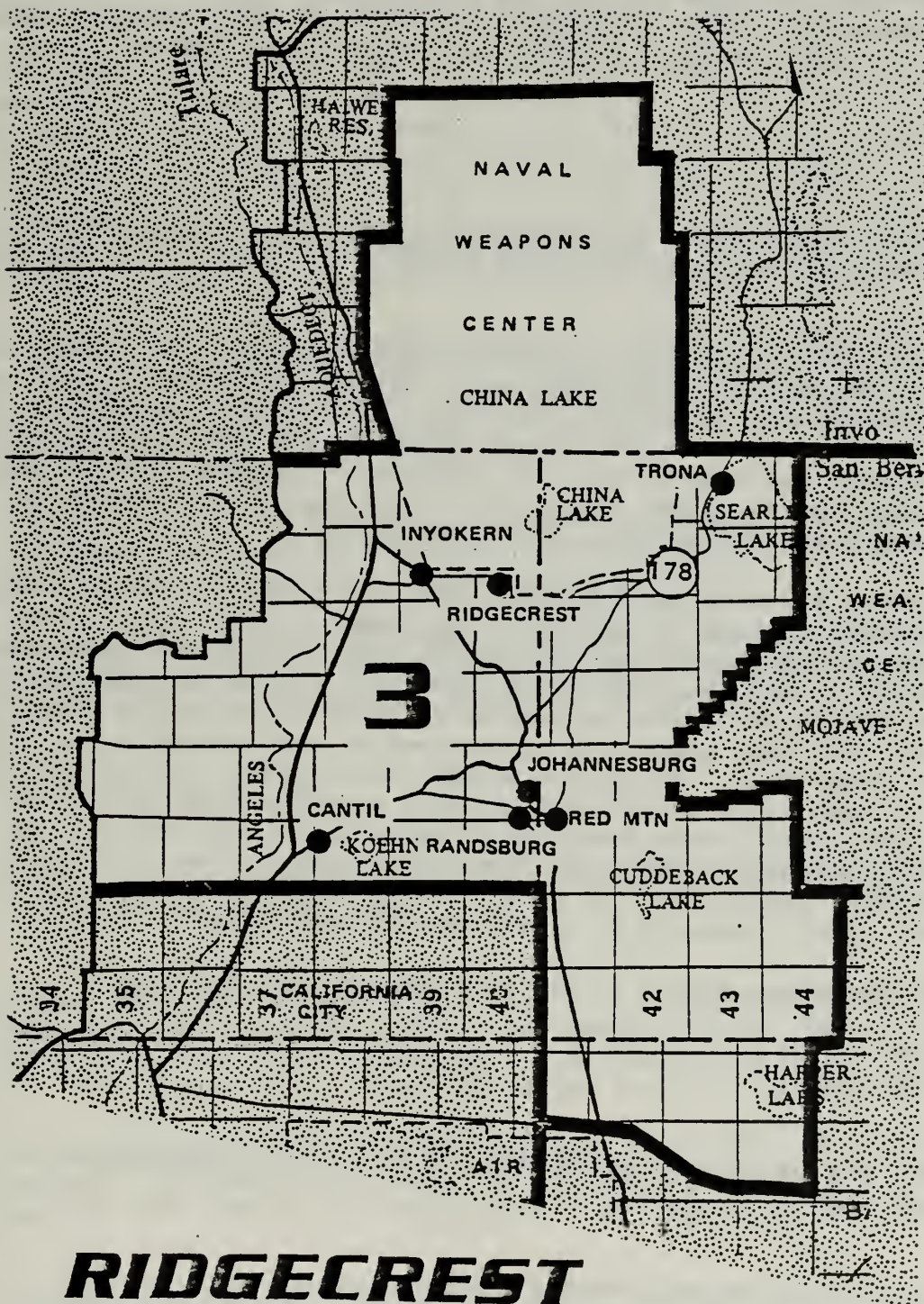
A diverse range of land uses can be found in this area, from turn-of-the-century mining to agriculture. Even the military is represented in the China Lakes Weapon Center, which occupies almost half the land area in this Market Area. The Center was first developed in the war years of the forties. It has drastically shaped the surrounding communities of Ridgecrest and Inyokern, bringing to this isolated desert region a large population of young, educated personnel.

The Kerr-McGee Chemical Company has also been a major provider of economic stability and population growth in Trona and Ridgecrest, and, as production increases in the area, growth should continue in these communities and in Johannesburg where Kerr-McGee mining operations are being enlarged.

ISSUES AND CONCERNS

"I go dirt biking a lot. Now that I'm going away to college, I'm kind of worried about what's going to happen to the desert while I'm gone."

There is a great diversity in the reasons people chose to live in this area, and this diversity carries over into the views people express about public desert land management. Four basic occupation groups expressed four differing opinions about desert management. The farming communities were least concerned over recreation in the desert and most concerned with the way new designations would affect water, grazing, and their general freedom from government control. The mining communities were extremely hostile towards the BLM; they resented the BLM's past management practices concerning mining and recreation, and were almost completely opposed to any type of recreation or wilderness designations since they would allow the government further control over lands that belong to the people. The third occupation group in Market Area Three is the military personnel and service providers. People in this group felt they could control their own recreational damage in the desert by only using existing trails, and so they felt recreation designations unnecessary. They were very aware of the beauty in the desert and how fragile that unique beauty is. They



were therefore concerned about grazing hurting the desert, and felt that preserving special areas of scenic quality through wilderness designation was necessary. The final occupational group in this area is retired people. This group was most concerned about controlling vandals which they felt could be accomplished through recreation designations. They were also concerned about saving areas of historic value or exceptional beauty in the desert.

CANTIL (pop. 500)

"I never have been able to figure out where the town of Cantil is; I guess you could say there ain't one really."

Cantil is an agricultural community producing mostly alfalfa. It lies just off Highway 14 between Mojave and Ridgecrest. The unique element of this community is the lack of any centralized town site. The town is completely void of retail or service structures and depends on Ridgecrest or Mojave for all supplies. The farms and ranches that lie scattered throughout the area range in size from small to very large, yet most all look healthy and productive, and the homes and barns reflect this air of well-being.

Because the area is a very popular hunting site, the community is periodically flooded with tourists. Cantil's residents have come to resent this yearly inundation because of trespassing hunters that tear up the land and cause very dangerous conditions through uncontrolled shooting. Because of these problems area residents have begun to see the need of designating recreation areas in order to control the large numbers of recreationists that currently are over-running desert communities. Seeing the damage done to their own private lands by unknowing or uncaring recreationists has also convinced many people in Cantil of the need to set aside areas for preservation in the desert. Yet like many desert communities that fear increased government control, Cantil shies away from the thought that the public desert lands, which they have enjoyed for years, should suddenly be restricted and controlled.

No special concerns about public lands in the desert were expressed.

INYOKERN (pop. 420)

"I'll tell you the best thing the BLM can do for the desert is to get out of it!"

A few miles west of Ridgecrest lies the community of Inyokern. Originally an agricultural area, Inyokern was much larger than Ridgecrest. But with the introduction of the China Lake Weapons Center, Ridgecrest rapidly outgrew its sister city. Today Inyokern residents work either at the China Lake Weapons Center or continue the tradition of agricultural production. The buildings in town are in fair shape, but most housing takes the form of mobile home living because of high building costs. Outside of town to the north, residential living combines with agriculture in large 5x10 acre tracts. Here the use of mobile homes is less noticeable.

People in Inyokern seemed very concerned that grazing ruined wildlife and plants. They also felt the BLM is partially responsible for the destruction because they don't fence their land and grazing animals wander into private lands and trample them. These people were more concerned about grazing hurting the desert than ORV use in the desert. The amiable feeling towards ORV use in the desert could be partly an extension of the residents' hostile attitude toward the BLM, and their fear of increased government control, and partly an indication of the large number of ORV users that live here. A strong dislike of recreation designations was expressed by some. They felt such designations would limit older people's enjoyment of the desert, and that such controls are unnecessary because these ORV users patrol themselves. Others felt recreation designations would be useful if they served to keep ORV users on existing trails. One area mentioned as a favorite local ORV spot is the area between Highways 14 and 395. This spot is especially useful for "signal hunts", where one ORVer hides with his radio on signal, and everyone else tries to hunt him out.

The people of Inyokern were sensitive to the beauty and fragility of the desert. The idea of preserving areas of particular scenic quality appealed to many. Basically these residents feel they can and should be able to use, enjoy and respect the desert in their own way--without the government or any of its agencies telling them how to go about it.

One special concern was expressed in Inyokern. Some residents were concerned that proposed land deals in the Owens Valley would "hijack" the available water, leaving the land barren and unusable for agriculture.

Because an anti-government sentiment is strong in Inyokern, many people feel the BLM should concern itself only with the vandal problem and keeping the public desert lands clear of trash, and leave the rest alone.

RIDGECREST (pop. 14,000)

"I've seen how grazing and ORV's can hurt the desert, and you've got to do something about it."

Ridgecrest came into a healthy existence with the inception of the China Lakes Naval Weapons Center in the 1940's. The Center brought young, well educated families to an area that, because of its distance from major population centers, would normally have a much lower population and less opportunities.

The people that move here for jobs soon come to love the desert that surrounds Ridgecrest. The town boasts many avid ORV users, hikers, and other desert recreationists who frequent the nearby desert to appreciate its beauty and openness.

The economy's stability is shown in the many community services provided, the educational opportunities offered, and the healthy housing market where homes are bought as quickly as they are completed. One unique exception to this air of healthy growth is the abandoned naval housing tract. A few years ago when the naval personnel were allowed to move off-base the tract was deserted. Today it stands desolate with broken windows, hanging shutters and barren yards.

The majority of ORV users in Ridgecrest are aware of the damage that ORV use can cause to the desert, and so they stay for the most part on existing trails. They feel that by just using existing trails the necessity of designating recreation areas is alleviated.

As in nearby Inyokern, the Ridgecrest residents felt grazing was very destructive to the desert. Some mentioned the loss of wild flowers caused by grazing; others related incidences of erosion which they attributed to overgrazing. One solution given to the grazing problem was not to restrict grazing, but rather charge more for grazing leases on BLM land which would in itself limit grazing.

Because the people of Ridgecrest love the desert, and are concerned about the damage they have witnessed in the desert from ORV use and grazing, they were mostly favorable to wilderness designations to preserve areas of greatest beauty.

RANDBURG (pop. 300)

"If you work for the BLM, I don't want to have nothing to do with you!"

Randsburg was originally called Rand Camp, a mining camp that sprang up with the gold discovery at the Yellow Aster Mine in 1895. The mine proved to be one of the two richest gold mines in the California desert, and Randsburg grew to a population in the thousands before the turn of the century.

The great Yellow Aster Mine closed down in 1934. Today many of the smaller mines lay in limbo, waiting until the economy of mining once again becomes favorable. The town exudes an air of silent waiting where the homes and buildings along the climbing and twisting main road show signs of disrepair, abandonment and age. Yet this condition befits the town, attesting to its colorful past and unsure future.

The town residents held a very strong dislike and dissatisfaction towards the BLM. The residents are miners who have either been turned off their mines by the BLM, or have at some time experienced difficulty with the agency's mining regulations. The residents may use the desert for occasional hunting trips, or artifact exploration, but the large amount of ORV traffic in the area comes from the L.A. basin. The residents enjoy the ORV inundation for it provides visitors, and a boost for the economy. But they also feel very strongly that the recreationists have the right to come out and use the public desert lands. They dislike the red tape involved in planning a bike race on BLM land, and they have heard stories of preposterous regulations requiring the replacement of wildlife and plants destroyed during the races.

The residents of Randsburg dislike the idea of wilderness designations since they feel they are just one more attempt by government to control people and their land. They felt the land should be used productively where possible; this includes energy development, grazing and simple enjoyment.

JOHANNESBURG (pop. 225)

"I tell those bikers to stay out of my yard, but they just don't listen."

Johannesburg developed around the Randsburg Railroad terminus. It supplied mining camps and the freight lines that reached out as far as Ballarat and Death Valley. The train was discontinued in 1933 and today most residents are retired. They come to Johannesburg for the weather, the small town atmosphere, and peace and quiet. They enjoy living in the desert, they appreciate its beauty and want to see it protected. Several incidents were mentioned regarding ORV users that run rampant through the town, tearing up private roads and property and disturbing the residents. The townspeople hope these occurrences will stop if recreation areas are designated and enforced. They would like to see severe fining or some control over vandals in the desert, and special protection given to areas of scenic beauty and historical value. They particularly wanted to preserve old mine sites for their colorful addition to the desert and their historical importance.

Satisfaction was expressed towards past BLM management in the desert, but hope for greater control over vandals and destructive activities was voiced.

RED MOUNTAIN (pop. 150)

"I shoot BLM rangers."

Like its neighbor Randsburg, Red Mountain sprang up with mining activity in the area. The upturned multi-colored earth that surrounds the town attests to the settlement's heritage. Today the residents are fighting a battle to become incorporated, and one difficult opponent has been the BLM. The people are naturally distraught because no chance of growth exists until the issue is resolved. The residents are also upset with the BLM because of its restrictive mining regulations. Many residents belong to the Western Mining Council which is an outspoken critic of the BLM.

Though many people here were unapproachable, those who agreed to discuss their views followed the feelings expressed in most other desert mining communities. They were against any type of government control--that includes both recreation and wildlife designations. They feel these designations are just an attempt by the BLM to take over the land which rightly belongs to the people. One dissenting opinion was expressed by the small non-miner population, who felt there were areas in the desert that needed to be controlled or would be irretrievably damaged.

TRONA (pop. 5,000)

"People who come here either stay for a day or they stay for 20 years."

Trona is 25 miles east of Ridgecrest on the playa of Searles Lake. The town grew up around the successive operations extracting and processing salines (one of which is trona) from the brine pumped from beneath the dry bed of the lake. The current operations are owned by Kerr-McGee; its three plants physically and economically dominate the town. Some of the residences have a "company town" quality--older, serviceable buildings with barren yards--but as the town increases its services, it has begun to keep its retired population and homes reflect a more stable quality. There is an enclave of approximately 100 mobile homes on the west approach to town.

"Rockhounds abound!" says promotional literature for Trona; recreational use of surrounding desert seems common. Residents familiar with BLM feel that the agency is entering a phase of less public responsiveness because of vehicle restrictions and proposed wilderness designations. While some areas, such as the Argus Mountains, are conceded as appropriate for wilderness designation, others, the Great Falls Basin, for example, have been used for 20 years by recreationists who claim extensive road evidence ignored by the Bureau. Approval was expressed for limiting motorcycle competitive events to heavily impacted zones as around Red Mountain, but a wariness about diminished access by local residents was coupled with this. Concern about a perceived hastiness of BLM resource inventory was also expressed.

MARKET AREA FIVE

THE KINGSTON AREA

"My son's a miner. If you designate wilderness here, where is he going to work?"

Market Area Five borders the famed Death Valley and as such shares many of the Valley's well known attributes, such as heat and mining. Mining first came to the Market Area around 1883 when "Borax" Smith opened the Amargosa Borax works, the Lila C. Mine near Death Valley Junction. This mining operation lasted through the first two decades of the twentieth century. While many independent miners came to the area, the population remained very sparse. And today Market Area Five remains the lowest populated of any of the inhabited market areas. The majority of its 940 people live in Shoshone and Tecopa, and the rest live in small scattered settlements.

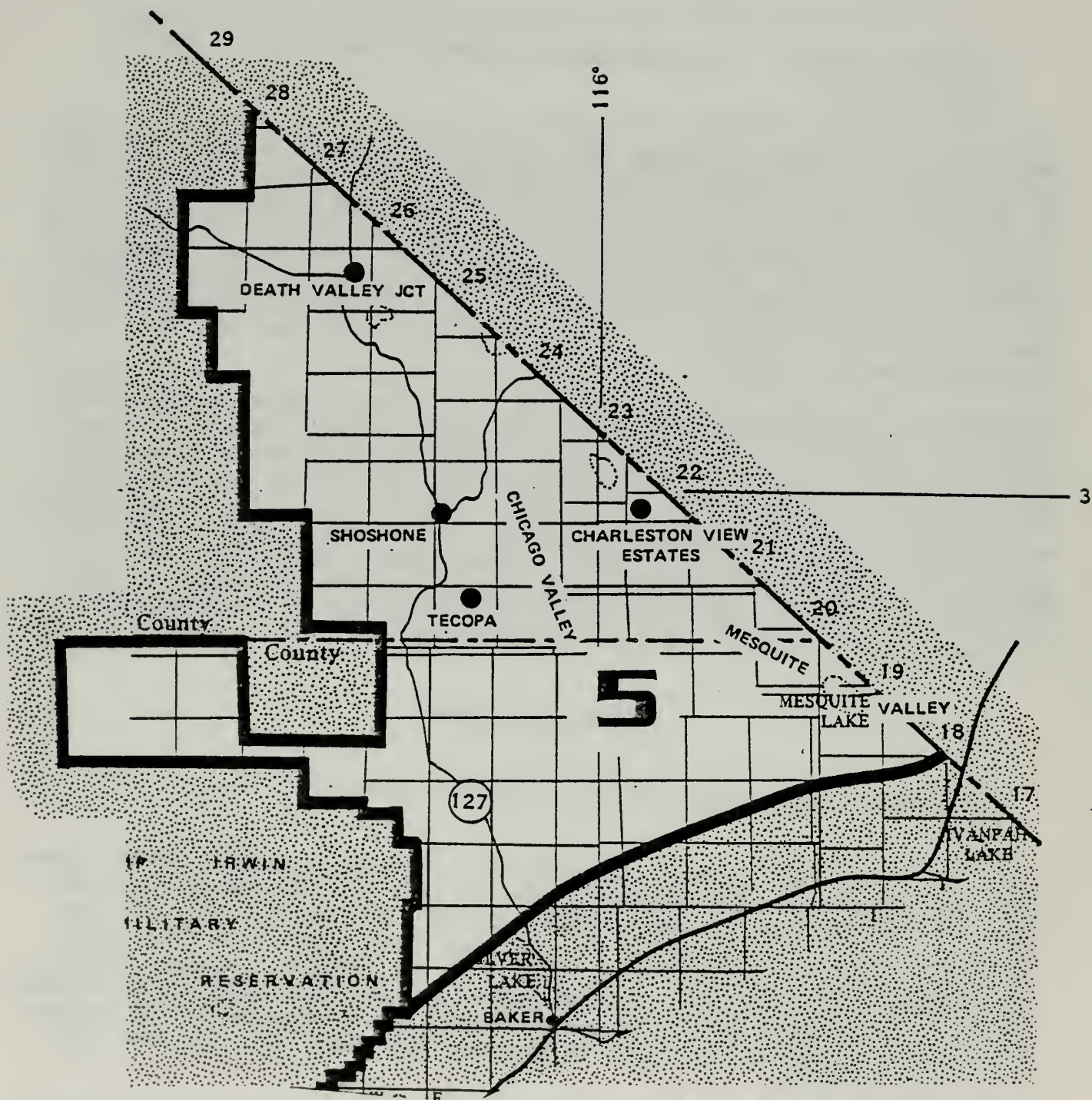
Most people in the Market Area either mine or are retired and even the larger communities offer few job opportunities besides mining and services. Yet on a small scale this market area shows a very versatile job market. The one most influential on the market area's economy is Tecopa's tourism. The tourist influx there is several thousand every winter. They come to enjoy the hot springs, and gain from the water's therapeutic powers. Death Valley Junction also provides tourist attractions to the area, with its historic opera house and hotel. Even agriculture is present in the lower Market Area, for the Mesquite Valley has begun producing healthy crops for its 50-75 inhabitants. And, finally, ranching is present around the Horse Thief Springs area.

ISSUES AND CONCERNS

"Wilderness means green forests--not barren desert."

While the Market Area's special concerns are as diverse as its job market, there were common general values expressed. For the most part government and wilderness were spoken of in the same disgusted breath. Many of the people in the area are miners or are the family of miners who have a grave fear that wilderness designation in the desert will end a great deal of desert mining activity, taking away their livelihood. This market area borders the Death Valley National Monument, so residents were eye witnesses to the mining shutdown in the Monument. They do not want to see any desert designation that would cause the same shutdown to happen again.

Wilderness designation met with disfavor in this area for other reasons. Some felt the term "wilderness" did not fit the desert. To them wilderness was lush green forests, not barren ground. They felt the desert could take care of itself--that it was indestructible. Others disliked the idea of wilderness designation because it simply represented one more attempt by government to control the people. These feelings were expressed not just by miners, but ranchers,



KINGSTON

and farmers, who all felt the government wants too much control over the desert. These people want to see less government regulations and more public land given over to private use.

There were some residents in the area who felt wilderness designation was necessary, in order to preserve areas of beautiful desert. These residents realize their view disagrees with the majority.

Another attitude strongly expressed was concern over vandalism. Destruction of historic sites and private property by touring recreationists was often discussed. But unlike other areas with vandal concern, the Kingston Market Area wanted little government help to handle the problem. Many felt they could take care of vandals on their own--usually through a shotgun approach.

Recreation designation met with little feelings of either approval or dislike. A rather moderate view seemed to be shared by most market residents, who felt some recreation designation was all right, but the less regulation the better.

The area's special concerns are as diverse as its job market. The Shoshone area residents were interested in seeing the BLM develop a rest stop/picnic area nearby, the Charleston View Estate residents were very interested in seeing the BLM erect a weir to channel away the mountain runoff that annually floods their area. The people of Death Valley Junction were concerned with seeing their whole town preserved as a historical site, and Tecopa residents wanted more control over visitors to their wild bird refuge. So while the market area held general views of non-government intervention in both their private lives and public lands, they have special desires that only the government could fulfill.

DEATH VALLEY JUNCTION (pop. 5)

"The walls of this theater and I dedicate these murals to the Past, without which today would have no beauty." ---Marta Becket (owner and performer at Amargosa Opera House in Death Valley Junction)

Death Valley Junction lies at the intersection of Highway 190 and 127 between the Death Valley National Monument and Nevada State Line. The town was historically a mining company town built by Pacific Coast Borax Company. But since the closure of the mine, the population has declined, and the buildings have deteriorated. Currently five people live in Death Valley Junction, a Postmaster, the hotel and opera house caretakers and operators. Three families live nearby at the highway maintenance station. Since the closure of the Amargosa Hotel this year, the only services provided are by the gas station (closed), and post office/rock shop. The opera house has been restored, and every year a festival and performances are held which are often attended by capacity crowds. For recreation the town dwellers enjoy either walking or driving on existing roads in the desert. And a few are rockhounds. But no specific recreation areas were mentioned.

The owners of the opera house are very concerned about preserving the town, and all historic sites. They are also concerned about miners constructing fences around the town because then visitors would have no nearby open area to park or camp.

The other town dwellers also fear any fence closure or attempts by either miners or government agencies to "lock up the desert", because their primary reason for living in Death Valley Junction is to enjoy the wide open spaces. Concern was expressed about vandals, and particularly, concern about "those guys that come around and just shoot at everything".

So basically, the people of Death Valley Junction generally agree with the need for preservation of historical sites such as Death Valley Junction. A general concern is also present about vandals and the need for government control of vandalism. The people enjoy the open spaces around their town as now existing, and dislike the idea of any but a small amount of government control in the desert.

BORAX MINE (pop. 1)

"I saw lots of my friends lose mines in the Death Valley National Monument, and I don't want to see it happen here with wilderness designation."

The Borax Mine is situated five miles North of Shoshone and typifies the many independent mines found in the desert. The caretaker has lived in the area for several years and has come to know most of the hundred or so independent miners that live in the area.

He expressed no special concerns, but did express some general values. He felt government control is needed over pollution and scarring of land. But that no government control is needed in this area because it isn't a wilderness, "because wilderness is lots of foliage and forest, etc." He did not make any comments about recreation or the BLM.

SHOSHONE (pop. 250)

"All that closing areas in the desert accomplishes is to put miners out of work."

Shoshone is a small community at the junction of Highways 127 and 178, just east of the Death Valley National Monument. Most people that live in the town are renters who live in trailers. A large influx of retired people come to the town during the winter, but throughout the rest of the year the employed population consists of 50 percent miners, government workers, and tourist services, and the other 50 percent of the year-round population is retired.

The tourist services are provided by a cafe, gas station, market and rock shop. A mine on the edge of town provides employment for many of the communities' miners. The town seems in very good condition, and supports a school, library and post office.

The community was very concerned about desert closure putting miners out of work, and several miners in the town had already experienced layoffs. The people did think that some wilderness is a good idea as long as it doesn't hurt the livelihoods of people who live in the desert. Also the general value that government is trying to control too much was shown.

The town expressed a special interest in seeing the spring on BLM land two miles south of Shoshone made into a rest stop with playground and picnic area. No feelings about BLM and its present management policies were expressed. Nor were any special recreation areas mentioned.

CHICAGO VALLEY (pop. 15-20)

"When is the BLM going to sell some of the land around here?"

Chicago Valley is a very small, isolated, community southeast of Shoshone near the California-Nevada border. The community is totally residential, consisting of six trailer homes and one house. The population is made up of miners, their families, and one teacher and his wife. The community's current physical condition is good. And its growth potential is better than average.

The general concern over vandalism, and the need for government control of vandals that most of the Market Area expressed, was also mentioned here. Also the general value that government has too much control over land and people was expressed. One other general value was expressed in this community. To the Chicago Valley residents, the word "wilderness" conjures up the picture of forests, and therefore a wilderness designation for the desert is felt to be both inapplicable and unnecessary.

Special concern was shown about BLM's land sales policy, for the residents want to see the land around then turned over to private ownership. As one man expressed, this community thought, "that anyone who can mine an area, and make it pay, can then pay taxes which would benefit the government, and therefore all land should be opened up for private development". No special areas for recreation, or scenic value were mentioned.

CHARLESTON VIEW ESTATES (pop. 50)

"It's high time the BLM got moving on building that levy so we won't get flooded out every year."

Charleston View Estates is an isolated residential community of mobile homes each on its own 2½ acre parcel. Most of the people who live here are retired

with the exception of two black jack dealers who commute to Las Vegas. They come here to live for quiet and isolation; as one man said, "it allows me to be independent".

The only general value expressed in Charleston View Estates was of the need to control four-wheel drives and dune buggies, because they hurt the desert. These residents shared the view with Chicago Valley residents that some public land should be sold into private ownership. The greatest concern shown in Charleston View Estates was over flooding that occurs annually by runoff from the Charleston Mountain. The residents were very disturbed by the lack of action by government agencies in diverting the water.

No opinions were expressed about wilderness, or recreation areas.

TECOPA (pop. 100-250 summer; 2,500-3,000 winter)

"The BLM has made mining all but impossible with its red tape."

Tecopa is located on a loop of road off Highway 127, about 50 miles north of Baker. An early stopping point for explorers and overland travelers because of its water, it grew into a town with discovery of gold, silver and lead deposits. As these mines played out, operations mining non-precious minerals, such as iron and talc, began to develop. A succession of mine closures has left only a few operations in the area employing the year-round population. The minerals in the famous hot springs continue to attract a growing number of "snowbirds" convinced of the water's curative powers.

Many of the town's permanent residents are retired, although the hot summers cause most retirees to migrate. Most people work in the mines, at the hot springs, or at the town's retail trade, consisting of a service station, gift shops with local paintings or gems and minerals, and the Tecopa Trading Post. The last, a long, low building with a yellow sign, has a grocery store and bar and is the local hangout. Other buildings in town are an abandoned service station, a school, a church, a few residences, and a trailer park filled in the winter. A mile up the road are both county and private bath houses and trailer grounds with capacities for several hundred visitors.

Anti-government feeling is strong among permanent residents. Their privacy has been destroyed, many feel, by meddling agents of the government, like the county building inspector who harasses them about the haphazard and ramshackle condition of the housing which some like to "cultivate" organically. Their strongest venom is reserved for the Department of Interior, and especially the Bureau of Land Management. They feel that BLM has made commercial operations difficult and all but exterminated the small, independent miner with its red tape. Government in any form is resented. Many would prefer to be a part of Nevada, which, they feel, has more consideration for their interests.

More moderate viewpoints exist. The town has attracted and still attracts in small numbers those who love its remoteness and qualities of desert beauty. Many have become involved in mining and grazing activities. While they express

concern for the desert's aesthetic values, they feel the government is dangerously misplacing priorities by its harsh treatment of mining interests. Commercial operations should be monitored for abuse of the desert landscape, but allowed the vitality to build successful operations, which, they feel, is precluded by government's current environmental stance. The small miner feels particularly frustrated. One related his anger at a court proceeding deciding whether his claim should revert to government control during which his knowledge of the claim's mineral potential, garnered during years of work, was pitted against that of a Federal geologist who had spent less than an hour on the claim. Current environmental concerns, while necessary, are causing legislation which weaken the impulse of human enterprise, many feel.

Because of these feelings, a wilderness designation for the area is strongly opposed. Out-of-area recreationists concentrate at Dumont Dunes and the rest of the area remains "wilderness" by its rugged nature; a legal designation would discourage mineral exploration. The closing of Amargosa Canyon and the development of a "special design" facility at Dumont Dunes is acceptable to most, but vehicle management exceeding this is unnecessary.

The winter population of the town, primarily retired people, enjoy the baths and move on to the next stop on their annual migration when the weather turns cold in this high desert area. While there are some rockhounds who explore the area while between baths, most stay in the trailer parks or go to the community center for square dancing and other activities and have little concern for what happens in the surrounding desert.

HORSE THIEF SPRINGS (pop. 2)

"Actually I hope I never do catch those vandals 'cause I'm afraid of what I might do to them."

A rancher and his wife are the only people that live at Horse Thief Springs. They live an isolated life many miles away from either the nearest town or other ranchers. This rancher expressed one view common to many ranchers and other people who live in the desert: that he enjoyed his isolation and wanted to keep it. His basic tenant was, "I don't bother anyone, so they should leave me alone--including government agencies." He was also very concerned about the problem of vandals who shoot up water tanks, windmills and other structures. Recently a new problem with vandalism has occurred. Vandals have begun stealing pieces of windmills, and in some cases the entire windmill.

He had no opinion about wilderness or recreation.

MESQUITE VALLEY (pop. 50)

"We work too hard to have the time or desire to get out and enjoy the desert."

The Mesquite Valley is totally an agricultural community. It is in good condition with a slowly rising population. The residents were unconcerned about

recreation or conservation because they are so isolated. But they were very anti-wilderness designation and anti-government. The valley residents expressed a value common to the rest of the Market Area in the desire to see public lands sold to private use so, "they can become productive".

DUMONT DUNES JUNCTION (pop. 2)

"We've got to start planning now for the ice age."

The couple that live by the Highway near Dumont Dunes are one example of the many retired couples that move away from the city and into the desert. By producing their own power (with a generator), and their own water supply (pumped by a windmill), the couple can truly enjoy the isolation, peace and quiet that the desert provides. The only interruption of their quiet occurs when a stranded dune buggy walks down from the dunes seeking aid in freeing his vehicle. And the couple usually gives the needed aid because they believe that city dwellers have a right and need to escape to the desert for recreation. But like many desert residents this couple believes that recreationists should use only designated areas, for some desert is fragile and valuable, and should be preserved through a wilderness designation.

The only special concern the couple voiced was the desire to see the BLM consider in the Desert Plan the effect the impending ice age will cause--how the crops back east will die and easterners will have to come west to live. Since the desert will have to provide both homes and food for a large percent of the nation's population, planning must begin now, they believe.

MARKET AREA SIX

LANCASTER-MOJAVE

"I came here for my job and to get away from the hustle and bustle of L.A. life."

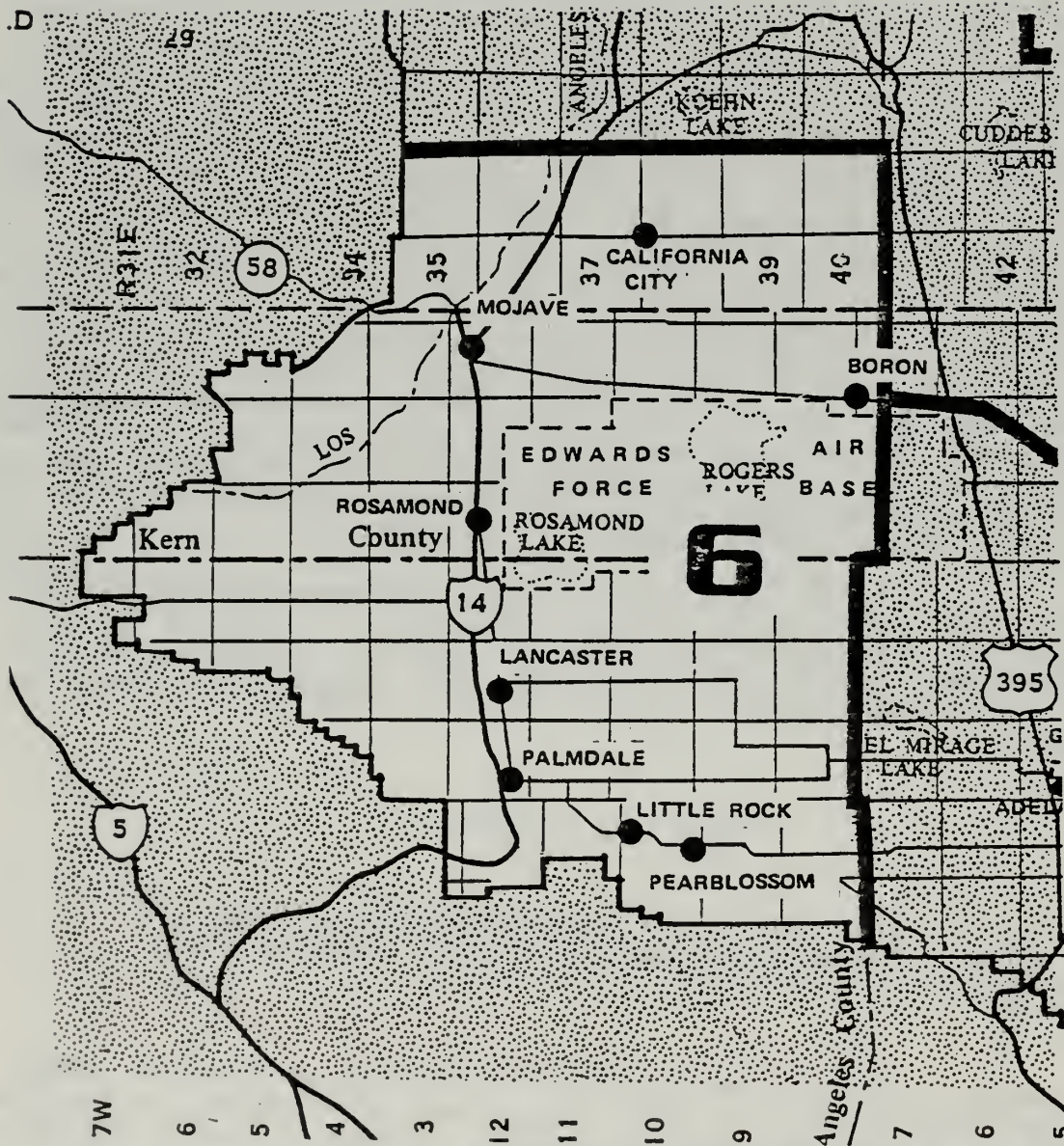
The Lancaster-Mojave Market Area, with a population of 112,000, has the largest population of any Market Area in the California Desert Conservation Area. The Market Area is a mix of urban and rural settlements, with the population centered in Lancaster (64,000) and Palmdale (12,000), and several smaller communities of 1-5 thousand residents. Most of the land in the Antelope Valley was originally used for cattle grazing. The first towns originated in the 1880's as railroad stations, and by the early 1900's legislation and technology provided the water that turned this into an area dominated by agriculture. With agriculture as a productive economic base, the communities in the Antelope Valley began to grow. World War II brought a change in the economy of the Market Area when Edwards Air Force Base, and Air Force Plant 42 dramatically transformed the population and economic base of the Valley. Today the aerospace industry is the prime economic base, with most employed residents of the Lancaster-Mojave Market Area in this industry. Recently forms of light manufacturing have also come into the valley, primarily in Palmdale and Lancaster. With such a diverse and stable economic base, the population, again particularly in Palmdale and Lancaster, has grown steadily for the past few decades, and, with the high percentage of young families, the future trend seems to be a stable continuence of the past few years.

In accordance with a steady growth rate and stable employment, the condition of most communities in the Lancaster-Mojave Market Area is reflected in well kept older buildings alongside bright new ones. The only exceptions are the communities of Boron and Rosemond, where neglect and abandonment of stores and homes is evident.

ISSUES AND CONCERNS

"I like being able to jump on my bike and ride near my home, yet I feel alot of recreationists abuse the desert, and so controls are needed."

The reasons people in this Market Area gave for choosing to live here ranged from employment opportunities, to lower housing costs, to seeking the peace and quiet a small town offers away from Los Angeles. Because of stable employment many Market Area Six residents have the time and money to use the desert frequently for recreation. Therefore the knowledge and concern about the desert was very high in this Market Area. Being only an hour away from Los Angeles, this area also has heavy usage from Los Angeles Basin area recreationists. The effects of such intensive use near their own towns has caused an almost unanimous agreement in Market Area Six for the need of designating recreational and wildlife areas in the desert. Even local avid ORV users who realized such



LANCASTER - MOJAVE

designations would limit their field of ORV use in the desert agreed with the need to preserve areas of untouched beauty. These ORV users have become accustomed to possible control because a few reckless, uncaring ORV users have ridden destructively through private orchards and lands near town and aroused the distrust and disgust of local residents. This dislike of seeing bikers ride on local land was exhibited recently by Little Rock's fight to keep a bike park from being developed nearby; the town won its fight and the park was moved to Hungry Valley.

The desire to preserve untouched desert lands is reflected locally in the Palmdale-Lancaster area by its construction of a poppy park. One component of the park was a fence to keep grazing sheep out of the property in the belief that grazing sheep hurt the wild desert flowers. Residents abruptly changed their opinion about grazing when the grazed land outside the park bloomed full of wildflowers, while the non-grazed, fenced in area lay virtually without flowers. Because of this experience, many residents in this Market Area now hold a strong belief that grazing in the desert does not hurt the desert, but is actually beneficial.

Though little anti-BLM sentiments were expressed, the residents of this Market Area are wary of increased governmental control. Many had come to this Area because of too many controls and pressures in larger cities. One such control they had come here to avoid was busing; many intensely dislike the idea of government-enforced busing and worry about what types of government control this new plan would bring.

Though Market Area Six resident are concerned about the need to protect areas in the desert, they generally expressed no strong opinions about what was going to occur on desert public lands. This is perhaps because the public lands in this Market Area are farther from the population centers than they are in other Market Areas.

PEARBLOSSOM (pop. 200)

"The problem with giving rangers guns is that they turn into macho men who are power crazy."

The town of Pearblossom is located along Highway 130, about 30 miles east of Palmdale. The population has remained stable through the last 20 years even though in the early 1950's a population boom was expected because of spin-off effects from the aero-space industry. But the boom never occurred in Pearblossom, and it remains much like it was decades ago.

Some of Pearblossom's population works for the aero-space industry at Lockheed or Edwards Air Force Base. The rest of the population work in town providing services to residents or in agriculture, are retired or receive welfare. The housing condition in Pearblossom reflects this diversity in employment and income bases between residents, for some disrepair in buildings is evident, though most housing is in good condition.

People of Pearblossom were of one mind on several issues. They believed recreation areas should be designated. Even avid bikers of Pearblossom felt recreation designation was necessary because a "few reckless, senseless fools" have ruined the sport for all other bikers. But these residents stipulated that recreation areas should be large enough and close enough to town to accommodate local recreationists. The only problem with designating areas for recreation is that bikers have to give up the freedom of jumping on their bikes and being able to ride around near town. It was a free and easy experience that Pearblossom bikers are sorry to see ended. Now they fear having to plan long trips just to get to a designated recreational area, and then being crowded because the area is too small.

Most residents felt wilderness designations were necessary but not if they extend over large areas. They felt only small areas, such as a petroglyph site, should be set aside. No local areas were mentioned as holding special scenic value.

A certain degree of anti-BLM sentiment was expressed by a few residents who have recently encountered BLM rangers who have become "overzealous with their police power". The complaint was that some rangers are too hard-nosed, too "rough and tough." An example was rangers traveling at extremely high speeds with lights blinking and sirens blaring in order to overtake some 4-wheeler quietly traveling along at 30 mph. Or the unnecessarily rough siting of a youth riding an off-road vehicle on the road a short distance in order to get to the gas station to fix his flat tire.

Residents feel that since rangers can now carry guns they should be schooled in diplomacy and have the ability to move from the hard line when reasonable.

LITTLE ROCK (pop. 3000)

"Twenty years ago wildflowers grew everywhere around here, but today grazing has stomped them all out."

The center of Little Rock lies along Highway 138, but most homes are scattered away from the highway, intermixed with fields of fruits and vegetables. This community differs from other small communities along 138 in that its employment is split between aero-space and agriculture. Los Angeles commuters, service providers, retired people and welfare recipients make up the remaining portion of the employment sector.

Most buildings in town seem in average to good condition, and a unique attraction of fruit and vegetable stands line the center street of town, showing the reason for the town's nickname of "fruit basket".

Little Rock's population is slowly growing as more people from Los Angeles move in to get away from city bustle. These commuters have been induced to the area because of its peace and quiet, a small town atmosphere, lower housing costs, and improved highway links to the Los Angeles Basin.

The people of Little Rock, whether commuters, farmers, or service workers, are very concerned about retaining their town's air of serenity. This concern came to fore when a motorcycle park was proposed nearby. The community rose up to stop the designation and succeeded. The community is also concerned about the threat of any more transmission lines being erected near town; any such proposal will certainly meet with a great deal of community displeasure.

Though a strong concern was shown towards preserving the community and nearby scenic areas such as the foothills to the south, little concern over desert preservation was shown. Some who did think recreation designations were necessary stipulated that the areas so designated should have no controls, such as limiting use to existing roads. Others felt recreational designations were totally unnecessary because recreation does not hurt the desert.

Wilderness designations received similar responses to recreational designations, for people were either against the idea totally, or were for such designations only with stipulations. These stipulations dealt with the number and size of the wilderness areas; people fear a wilderness designation like Alaska's will occur and swallow up the whole desert. Therefore, they think wilderness designations should be few and very small, only preserving areas of unique historical value or areas of breath-taking beauty.

There was little anti-government or anti-BLM sentiment expressed, and the only special concern was shown by an antique shop owner who felt people finding artifacts or "treasures" in the desert should be able to take them home and keep or sell these objects as desired.

PALMDALE (pop. 12,000)

"Since we don't have much public land around here, what happens in the desert public lands doesn't really concern us."

Palmdale lies at the intersection of Highways 14 and 138 about 60 miles north of Los Angeles. During the late 1800's and early 1900's Palmdale was a stage-coach station for the Butterfield Stage lines. The population grew at an average pace until the 1950's when the aero-space industry moved into the area. Then the population rise became more rapid and has continued to rise ever since. Those of the population not employed in aero-space industry work for services in town or are retired. The community structures reflect the sure air of growth and employment that the town has known for decades and little deterioration is evident.

Concern was shown about the need to preserve small areas of scenic quality both in general and particularly nearby. Specific areas mentioned for preservation were the foothills, Fenner Canyon, and Rock Creek.

The people of Palmdale do not use the desert very much for recreational purposes. They did indicate that recreational designation is a good idea, though most felt the public desert lands were too far away to use extensively, so they are not concerned with whether or not recreation areas are designated.

Grazing and mining were not seen as destructive elements to the desert. One explained why most felt grazing actually helped the desert. A short while ago the people of Palmdale became concerned that the desert wildflowers were being destroyed by grazing and the basic demands of human existence in the area, so the residents pooled resources and purchased a parcel of nearby land. The area was fenced off to prevent grazing animals from foraging in the park area. This "poppy park" turned out to be a great disappointment to area residents for, as wildflowers began their yearly blossoming, the grazed lands around the park filled with the colors of wildflowers while the park remained barren of them. From this experience many people in the Palmdale area have come to view grazing in the desert as beneficial to maintaining the natural beauty of the desert.

No special opinions were expressed about the BLM maintenance of government land, though one person stressed his dissatisfaction with the government telling people what to do with their own private land.

LANCASTER (pop. 64,000)

"Those poppy park people had a good idea, they just went about it the wrong way."

Lancaster lies along Highway 14 north of Palmdale. Originally Lancaster was a railroad station for Santa Fe and in 1890 Lancaster could boast of having the largest population in the desert. Today its main source of employment is the aero-space industry, with agriculture, services, light industry, and retirement forming the remaining employment. Lancaster's new construction and well-kept appearance blend to form a picture of healthy growth.

The people of Lancaster were able to see and understand the need of multiple use planning in the desert. They have seen the damage that intensive bike and 4-wheel drive use can cause, and therefore understand the need for some control in the desert. Even the large amount of bikers and 4-wheel drivers who live in Lancaster see the need to preserve areas of the desert, although they expressed much pro and con sentiment on designating recreation areas in the desert. The one bike park that currently exists in the Hungry Valley area is dissatisfying and little used by these residents. Overall, little strong concern was expressed about what happens to public lands in the desert since most land nearby is private. So people mostly recreate on private land and are not really very concerned about what designations come to pass in the desert.

In addition to Lancaster residents' desire to see lands preserved in general is a desire to preserve lands locally. This desire is shown in the favorable response Lancaster residents gave the creation of the nearby poppy park. Unfortunately, many feel the fencing out of grazing sheep was responsible for the poor showing of wildflowers in the park last year and the park, as exists, is a waste of time and money.

No anti-BLM sentiments were expressed.

ROSEMOND (pop. 2,300)

"It doesn't matter what I say, you guys (the government) will do exactly what you want."

Rosemond lies along Highway 14 between Lancaster and Mojave. The buildings' condition runs from poor to average, with some vacant buildings evident along the main street. Residents are employed at the nearby industrial plant, in aero-space work and some tourist services.

The people of Rosemond see the need for both recreation and wilderness designations in the desert. Even bikers in town supported the idea of designations. But displeasure was expressed with the designation because implementation of the designation would require large patrols of rangers which would just cost more tax money. One special area mentioned for wilderness designation was the southeast fringe foothills around the Sierras. The area around Barstow was recommended as a good recreation site.

One special concern mentioned was the Feather Reservoir; residents feel they paid for a reservoir which wasn't needed locally because they have wells. They felt that only the farmers to the west benefit from the reservoir.

While most residents expressed little knowledge about the BLM, some extreme dissatisfaction with BLM practices was expressed. BLM's restrictions on miners were called "ridiculous" because the requirement of special tires on certain roads makes it impossible for miners to get to claims. Also the feeling that the BLM should give up some land because they own the whole desert but they know "they won't ever give any of it back". Some also felt the government budget system is all wrong because left-over money is spent needlessly when the year is running out so next years budget will remain at the same level. These same individuals were also strongly opposed to rangers wearing guns. They think the rangers will just get shot, "violence begets violence".

MOJAVE (pop. 3,500)

"We know how much damage ORV's can do in the desert, because all the disrupted crust of the desert is picked up by high winds and blows into every crack of every building in our town."

Mojave lies at the junction of Highways 58 and 14. It first came into existence as a railway station for the Santa Fe Railroad in 1876. Today the line is still used extensively, and the town has located totally on the east side of the tracks. Many of the buildings in Mojave reflect the towns long existence. The massing of motels, cafes, and gas stations lining the main street reflect the town's heavy reliance on tourist services. The people who do not work in tourist related services either work in the aero-space industry, are retired or on welfare.

Possibly because of nearby torn up desert lands from ORV use, the people of Mojave are totally in agreement on the need for wilderness and recreation designation. This sentiment is even shared by bikers in Mojave, with the added stipulation that local land be left open because that is the land Mojave bikers use most frequently. Another area recommended for recreation designation was Jawbone Canyon. This attitude reflects the general feeling in the area that closing BLM public lands will not greatly effect these residents since they bike mostly on nearby private land.

Residents feel the desert in general is worth preserving and specific spots recommended for wilderness designation were Soledad Mountains and Red Rock. However most felt that no local areas were of special scenic value except the areas already under protection, such as the Red Rock protected area and the Poppy Park to the south near Lancaster.

One special concern voiced by Mojave residents was the issue of sludge transport to the area. They were upset that Los Angeles was considering piping sludge up to the Mojave area. They were also very concerned that the public meetings regarding the sludge project were being held in Lancaster instead of Mojave, even though the proposed waste disposal site was much closer to Mojave.

No opinions were expressed about the BLM management of public lands.

CALIFORNIA CITY (pop. 1500)

"I tell you, those vandals in the desert have taken away all my pleasure in the desert, so I just don't go anymore."

California City was first promoted in the 1950's as a future city with secure real estate investment. But because of false promotional statements, the lots sold were rarely built upon, so today though land is available for a much greater population, only 2,500 people live in California City, and since there is almost a total lack of any resale market, the chances of any future growth in California City is remote. The buildings are all in good condition because the town is a young, planned community. The employment is limited to services, and many are retired or commute out of town to work.

Few residents of California City were ORV users of the desert, but many enjoyed short driving excursions out into it. For the most part residents were very concerned about the need to preserve areas of the desert.

One person was very aware of the damage ORV's can cause for he had seen the destruction of the dirt ends on the airport runway. Others were aware of similar destruction they had seen on outings to the desert.

California City residents were in favor of designating both wildlife and recreation designations. The only reluctance to wildlife designation shown was the fear that too much desert will be closed off.

Concern was shown in California City about the problem of vandalism in the desert. Some residents have completely stopped recreating on the desert because of vandal fear.

Little knowledge of the BLM was shown in California City. But because of vandal fear and the absence of anti-BLM sentiment, many residents were favorable towards more government control in the desert.

BORON (pop. 4,000)

"I came to the desert for its clean air because of my health, yet with all this factory development the air here is getting as bad as the city."

Boron was born in 1928 when the Boron Mine began production. Today some residents still work at the mine, but most work in the aero-space industry or are retired. The size of the town has grown little in recent years, so few new buildings exist along Main Street. A few cafes, shops and gas stations provide some services to residents and tourists, but generally residents travel to nearby larger cities for many services.

The people of Boron, though largely unfamiliar with the Desert Plan or BLM, were very informed about problems of overuse arising in the desert. A consensus opinion was expressed on the need to preserve desert land in wilderness areas. Because many residents had moved to Boron for health reasons, they were anxious to see multiple-use designations clearly defined in order to keep desert air from reflecting the ill use of the desert surface. The only reservation expressed to the idea of wilderness designation is that it may close up the desert to older people who need motorized vehicles to enjoy the desert. Special concern was expressed about preserving archeologic sites, for residents have seen the destruction to such sites from vandals. This desire to see vandals controlled was a concern expressed repeatedly by residents of Boron, who felt many types of recreational enjoyment in the desert had been lessened or almost destroyed by vandals.

A special concern was expressed by some in Boron about the proposed power plant construction nearby. While residents felt it would add greatly to polluting the small amount of clean air we still have in the desert, others who come from mining backgrounds, and those with growth interests were anxious to see the new industry begin.

MARKET AREA SEVEN

BARSTOW - VICTORVILLE

"You from down below, huh?"

Market Area Seven sits on the western border of the CDCA, above the "instep" formed by the San Bernardino Mountains. Like other market areas bordering the metropolitan valley areas, it has a relatively large population for the desert. Barstow (18,000) is the trade center for Lenwood (4,000), Daggett (1,500), Hinkley (2,500), and Newberry Springs (2,000). Victorville (14,000) serves Phelan-Pinion Hills (2,500), Lucerne Valley (3,500), El Mirage (350), Adelanto (4,500), George Air Force Base (7,300), Apple Valley (17,000) and Hesperia (19,000). The latter two towns and Phelan are experiencing phenomenal growth--Hesperia may be the fastest growing town in the West--but have not developed independent trade centers. Except for Adelanto, which incorporated at the beginning of the decade, only Barstow and Victorville are incorporated.

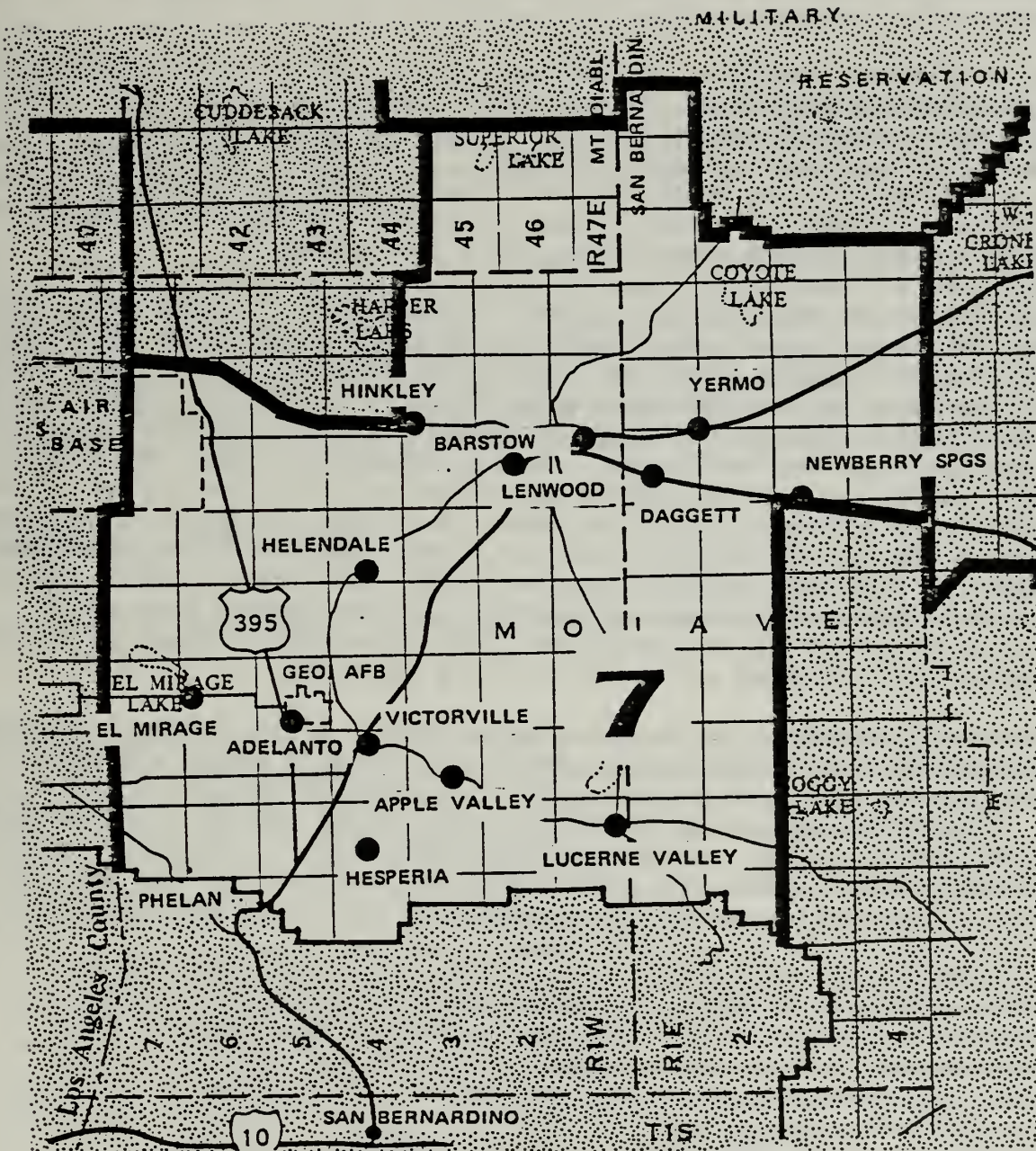
Mining, military activities, transportation and recreation are primary industries. Some of the largest cement and gypsum operations in the Southwest are located in Victor Valley and the Lucerne Valley. Railroads following the route of early explorers and settlers on the Mojave River gave many of these towns their first real growth. Major diesel shops and rail-switching yards of the Santa Fe Railroad are in Barstow. With Victorville, Barstow shares a significant highway related economy. Travelers stopping in Barstow find themselves "a tank of gas from Los Angeles, Las Vegas, and Needles". The rich recreational resources of the desert surrounding Barstow and resort activities near Victorville induce many to spend tourist dollars here.

Military activities around both Barstow and Victorville contributed to sharp growth during World War II. Remaining extremely important economically are George Air Force Base at Adelanto, and the U.S. Marine Corp Supply Center at two locations near Barstow.

Agriculture is a part of the economy. Pumping water from the subsurface flow of the Mojave River, many tend fields, predominantly alfalfa, all along the crescent of the Mojave River Valley. Wells serve farms in Lucerne Valley, Hinkley, and El Mirage.

Barstow has recently lost population, primarily because of military cutbacks. The Victorville area growth is the result of the stability of local industry added to by in-migrating retirees and many families attracted by cheap land and fleeing urban woes. Victorville's proximity to urban areas allows many to commute out of the area for work. These people have essentially brought their sources of income with them; they comprise the largest group of workers in the CDCA who commute out of the desert.

The condition of buildings varies extremely, from abandoned roadside services on Highway 66 to Victorville's new shopping centers. Residences range from some of the rich homes in Apple Valley to dilapidated houses found in parts of Hinkley and other areas. New construction is apparent everywhere in Victor Valley.



BARSTOW - VICTORVILLE

ISSUES AND CONCERNS

"I came here to get away from the city. I don't want it following me up here."

Growth and its problems dominate the interests of this Market Area's communities. The stalling of growth in Barstow, because of the recession in the early 1970's and cutbacks in military activity, leads it to cast about for new avenues of income and to jealously guard present resources. Victorville and its orbit of cities are exhilarated by its expansion, but finds many of its residents, particularly those with fresh memories of smog, crowding, and other urban woes, temper the growth spirit with reservations about its burdens.

Public lands issues are strongly felt in and around Barstow. With a vital base as a desert recreation center, and a heavy use of these resources by residents who lack the nearby mountain areas and local resort facilities that Victor Valley people have, Barstow fears wilderness designations and recreational vehicle management. Residents directly or indirectly employed in these services believe an active business will be constricted. Many of Barstow's people, who find admirable BLM's recent adoption of respect for desert wildlife, geology and history (as evidenced by an information station there), feel that the Bureau is actively hostile towards the desert vehicle enthusiast. They find the obstacles caused by government red tape more daunting than any a dirt bike track offers. Others, motivated both by their own desert appreciation and the economic concern of maintaining an attractive desert playground, find wilderness designation acceptable and control of vandalism and desert scarring necessary.

Moving south to Victorville, public lands become fewer, as do residents strongly expressing views on their disposition. Many of this area's people are new to the desert; they express their feelings for it in terms of its lack of urban features. In several communities, Hesperia, Apple Valley and Phelan particularly, this urbanphobia has created rambling, diffuse "antcities". These have poorly developed retail trade centers, are unincorporated, and have few lots smaller than 2½ acres. Prospective buyers are attracted by cheap land and "elbow room".

Recreating primarily on their own land, on resort facilities with golf and tennis, in developed county parks, or nearby mountain resorts, most sense no great heat generated on issues of wilderness or vehicle designations on public land. Desert recreationists here generally supported such measures, citing Johnson Valley to the east as an example of overuse. Some property owners have problems because of the overextended county policing of trespassing and vandalism and believe more available public land, or developed facilities on the land, would alleviate the problem.

Two issues particular to this market area are sludge transport proposals and a prospective power generating plant. The question of whether or not residents want the sludge of Los Angeles transported to solar drying areas nearby is easiest to answer: they do not. Even those with strong growth interests who find some economic value in the project feel that it would damage the area's image as a clean, pleasant environment. "It may be L.A.'s backyard, but it's our living room," is the rallying cry. Many find the proposal ironic in view of the State of California's recent imposition of a local sewage control project on the area.

The construction of a power plant in Lucerne Valley is more controversial. The effects on the job supply would be negligible, but the utility company would assist the Mojave Water Agency in financing a pipeline to the California aqueduct, a project the Agency can not bear the brunt of alone. In view of lowering water tables and a growing population, the need for water is conceded by everyone, but the presence of smog in the valley will not be tolerated by some. Smog is rapidly becoming the only thing that distinguishes Victor Valley from the cities, many feel.

Mining, a historical and current industry, is rarely objected to by people here. Where mining potential and wilderness value conflict, mining should be given sway, most believe. Grazing, a marginal activity here, arouses no strong feelings of support or opposition.

Each community grapples with local issues. Phelan does not know where to put all its new school children. El Mirage suffers the presence of recreationists on El Mirage Dry Lake, a great part of which is managed by BLM. Adelanto copes with incorporation and the irritating influences of nearby George Air Force Base. Daggett and Newberry Springs await glumly the advent of the "Barstow Slug". Helendale, halfway between Barstow and Victorville, deals with its schizophrenic nature as both old and new desert influences seek to coexist.

VICTORVILLE (pop. 14,000)

"Some of these ideas are pretty good. Where are the BLM lands, exactly?"

Incorporated and a retail center, Victor Valley's "key city" sits securely in the storm of growth around it. It has passed through a variety of roles: an early cattle ranching settlement, a railroad stop, a site for early western movies and Hollywood's desert spot before Palm Springs became popular. Today, George Air Force Base and large cement, gypsum and limestone facilities comprise its employment base. Its oversized retail activity has spread from the town's original location on the river to large shopping centers up the hill to the south. Serving highway travelers, resort visitors and the new population that has migrated to surrounding cities with weak outlets for goods and services, it contributes hearty support for its well developed city services. These are extended also to Spring Valley Lake, a nearby resort community. Higher property costs keep its growth rate modest but steady. Homes range from small, well kept older homes near the river to newer and larger houses farther south, and to the west of the freeway, where some interests are pushing for condominium development. Unlike the orbit of towns around it, Victorville is relatively compact.

The town newspaper reflects the vision of Victorville's government and business interests: attract new industry and maintain in-migration. Though somewhat uneasy about the problems their sister towns' diffuse land patterns cause, residents remain beneficiaries of an area population of 65,000, and anticipate a growing number of urban-type amenities. Newer residents are welcomed, although they inflate property prices with their imported large equities from recently sold houses in coastal areas, and their values are somewhat at odds with the more established growth interests.

Although there is a consensus that sludge transport from Los Angeles will be bitterly opposed, many split on the issue of the Lucerne Power Plant. Although its funding of a water system is conceded as necessary, many will not tolerate the smog that motivated their flight from the cities.

Other public lands issues arouse little interest. Recreation consists of visiting the cities, mountain resorts, and nearby resort activities. Vehicle recreation in the desert is mainly on private and county land. BLM is little known.

ADELANTO (pop. 4,500)

"Did you feel that? That's a jet plane."

The inventor of the electric iron turned this mesa eight miles west of Victorville into a small farming community. Alfalfa farming still contributes to the economy, as does its position on well-traveled 395, but Adelanto's present distinction is George Air Force Base. With a staff of 8,000 civilians and military personnel, the town's well, and constant jet traffic, the base supports, waters and aggravates residents. In 1970, Adelanto became the first town in the area after Victorville to incorporate. Dissatisfied with county services and chafing at the dominance of the base, it struggles to attract new sources of income and some of the residents settling in other parts of the valley.

A continual source of irritation is the noise of jets. Many residents believe pilots cut short a flying pattern that skirts the city. The din makes prospective residents and industry avoid the area, people believe. Housing of military personnel and water are also sources of dissatisfaction for residents. Few would like base activities discontinued, but there is some bitterness that the town must bear the burdens of one of Victor Valley's prime sources of income, while losing out on the area's growth.

Accordingly, recreational vehicle designations are disliked. Road traffic to El Mirage Lake and other recreational areas is important to the town's shaky tax base. The town's newspaper publishes a supplement magazine for dirt bike activities; one recent issue encouraged participation in the Phantom Duck Barstow Run.

Wilderness designation of small areas inaccessible to vehicles is acceptable, as are moderate cultural site and animal habitat preservation. L.A.'s sludge transport project is absolutely opposed, but the Lucerne Valley generating plant is an encouraging prospect for growth and industry.

PHELAN-PINION HILLS (pop. 3,700)

"It's getting too crowded here. I think I'll move up to Oregon."

The homestead tradition that established Phelan continues with the influx of families whose breadwinner commutes "down below". Located ten miles west of

Hesperia and a few miles east of Highway 138, it offers one of the easiest commutes in Victor Valley to San Bernardino, and realtors report brisk sales to young families. The small school was unprepared for dozens of new enrollees; many are being taught in trailers the district had to rent. Some of their families live in a similar makeshift way; so eager are they to move onto their five acre lots that they arrive days, and sometime weeks, before their gas and electric services do.

The Beverly Hills of Phelan is Pinion Hills, where retirees live on large pinion pine-adorned lots stretching back into the San Bernardino foothills above Highway 138. A tract of empty lots south of the highway were sold a few years ago by a subdivider who asked for, and got, 10-15 thousand per five acre lot. The lack of water prevented housebuilding, but the development of the Zone L water system may bring homes.

Residents are extremely property conscious. Their concerns revolve around keeping a distance from their neighbors. Conflicts over the concept of "elbow room" arise between older and new residents. Fights over loose dogs and children on motorcycles occur. Few of the commuters say they have the energy to drive to recreational areas on weekends; most say they just enjoy their own place, with its view of the valley and the cool climate of its higher elevation.

Public lands issues are remote concerns. Some expressed enthusiasm for recreational vehicle management, believing that developed public land areas would draw off the motorcycle activity that plagues many of them. Others say they sense a move by government to keep new people out of the desert; many resent this, but a few, particularly older residents, approve of such a policy.

EL MIRAGE (pop. 350)

"Guy came up to the door--demanded I let him use my bathroom, him and his motorcycle buddies."

El Mirage is a loose collection of alfalfa farms and occasional buildings along the road from Adelanto. Farmers and retirees are currently being joined by a slowly increasing group of young families who commute to work in other parts of the Victor Valley. A few work at an electronics plant and a tungsten processing mill. These, a few real estate offices, an airport for glider enthusiasts and a cafe are the only non-residential sites here.

A dry lake bed to the north gives the town its name and current problems. Weekend visitors use the hard surface for several types of recreation, from motorcycling to model airplane flying. Although BLM manages most of the lake and does not restrict recreationists, the agency has not provided legal ingress or egress, camping or sanitary facilities, supervision of activities, or indications of public land boundaries. Consequently, residents say, trespassing constantly occurs and incidents of violence occasionally result between owners and recreationists. Lacking other recourse, recreationists constantly call on local houses for use of toilets or phones to summon medical assistance.

For the most part, residents concede that the lake and the Shadow Mountain area behind it are good areas for recreationists, but BLM's promised "special design" to control them is too long in coming, and they fear the agency will make only perfunctory efforts to provide facilities and supervision.

APPLE VALLEY (pop. 17,000)

"I go to the city for my entertainment."

Because of its active promotional efforts, Apple Valley was at one time the most well known town in the California desert. Named for its efforts to become an orchard center, it began shaping its present identity after World War II, when an oil magnate began efforts to create the "Palm Springs of the Mojave". It has failed to incorporate or develop a trade center independent of Victorville, five miles to the east, but the "Palm Springs" ethic shapes certain zoning practices and zealous promotion as a resort and retirement center. Apple Valley Inn and Apple Valley Ranch have long been popular dude ranches (although "guest ranch" is now preferred) and realtors are briskly selling large modern homes on large lots to retirees and, increasingly, younger families. The "champagne climate" and recreational activities, including an avid horse riding contingent, are selling points. The towns goods and service suppliers are spread along several miles of Highway 118; the most prevalent commercial building is the real estate office. A modern hospital is here, as well as an active airport that many professionals and businessmen use to commute to offices in Los Angeles and other metropolitan areas. Residents include active and retired personnel from George Air Force Base. For many years the area played a "Beverly Hills" role to Hesperia's blue collar and welfare make-up. While the gap is closing between the two, Apple Valley remains more selective in its growth ambitions. Light industry is being solicited.

Absolutely opposed to the sludge project, residents also display much concern about possible smog produced by the Lucerne Valley plant. The need for power is conceded, but location of air polluting plants in other areas, or the development of clean operations, such as nuclear power generation, is suggested often as an alternative.

Wilderness and vehicle designations are approved of. Secure with their own golf courses, horse ranches, tennis courts and trout lakes, residents in Apple Valley are not ORV enthusiasts or desert recreationists of any stripe, for the most part. The preservation of an attractive surrounding scenery is important.

BLM is little known, but generally considered a benign presence.

LUCERNE VALLEY (pop. 3,200)

"We had a vote on that not too long ago. I don't know why they voted it down, but they did."

Twenty-four miles east of Victorville, Lucerne Valley has not yet experienced the welter of growth around that city. Its shallow water made it a pioneer

oasis at the beginning of its history; this water and excellent soil later provoked the growth of alfalfa, the European term for the crop giving the area its name. A number of nearby resorts of long standing give the town a fame as a dude ranch capital, and the newer breed of recreationists on vehicles pass through to use the dry lake beds of Johnson Valley or spots in the Big Horn and Sidewinder Mountains. A small retail center at the intersection of Highways 247 and 18 includes a cafe, a grocery store and gas station, and the county maintains a library branch here. North of the highway houses are scattered throughout the alfalfa belt, but most homes spread south from the highway to dot the hills in a random pattern, including implanted mobile homes and small, modest houses with desert landscaped yards. Water is provided by a bewildering array of private wells and local water companies. At the top of the hill the huge Permanente Cement plant stands, employing many local residents. Others commute to jobs in Victorville or other surrounding areas, although the extra half hour commute to "down below" gives the area a smaller proportion of long distance commuters than around Victorville. Nonetheless, the traditional farmer and retiree population is gradually being supplanted by young families wanting to share the high desert climate, space and privacy of this small town.

Most residents anticipate growth as the available land around Victorville decreases. Reactions to this are varied; moves by some citizens to incorporate and begin shaping a policy of growth are opposed by many who prefer the town remain small and remote.

This latter group likes neither the potential a power plant nearby has for causing growth nor its potential for pollution; many of these are retired people whose united voting influence inhibits the growth interests. Others feel the character of the town can be maintained, but the additional water the construction of the plant will provide is necessary to keep agriculture healthy and local water from being overtaxed by an inevitable in-migration.

Some out-of-area recreationists are accused of scarring desert terrain with indiscriminate vehicle use, vandalizing property, and shooting guns near homes. Organized groups are considerate and well-behaved, many feel, but the "strays" are little tolerated. Rockhounding and other forms of desert recreation are popular among local people; they feel vehicle management programs are acceptable but are doubtful that abuses can be patrolled effectively. Wilderness designation appeals to the strong values of desert preservation many express, but those who use vehicles to enjoy the desert feel local areas are not appropriate because of their past heavy use.

HESPERIA (pop. 19,000)

"This lot is big enough for the kids and the dog."

In the 1880's land developers promoted Hesperia as the coming "Denver of the West". The effort failed, but its spirit has been reincarnated in the town's present dizzying growth. At 19,000, it is the Market Area's largest town, and local experts estimate a 20 percent growth next year. Its closeness to San Bernardino, its cheaper land than Victorville and Apple Valley, and its liberal

zoning make it the prime beneficiary to the recent large in-migration. A forty minute commute to cities "down below", Hesperia is attracting the young, middle-class and working-class family unable to afford housing in the cities.

Growth has far outstripped services. Unincorporated, the town relies on the county, already overextended in other areas of the valley, to provide police, fire and other city services. A meager retail center and an "anticity" outlook by many residents makes moves towards incorporation difficult. Housing is extremely scattered and often not served by paved streets; this land pattern forebodes many problems of service development.

Public lands issues concern few. Leaders have their hands full with local problems. Commuters are too tired of driving during the week to make trips to the far off public lands for recreation, and they prefer enjoying their own homes and large lots or the nearer mountain and river spots. Motorcycle riding on city streets and private lots by children is a local problem, which some feel could be relieved if attractive facilities for vehicle recreation could be developed on public lands. The tolerance for vehicle management stems from both a lack of heavy local use and the perception it might alleviate local problems.

Attitudes towards the wilderness program and BLM reflect the same low priority public lands issues have here. They are considered generally benign presences which neither help nor hinder the local preoccupation with developing a liveable city.

The sludge transport proposals are opposed strongly, but feelings on the Lucerne Valley power plant differ according to the particular vision of the area each resident has. Water and jobs are not considered a sufficient trade-off for smog and increased growth by many.

BARSTOW (pop. 18,000)

"The BLM just doesn't understand the sport of bike racing, and it doesn't try to."

A map shows reasons for Barstow's nicknames "Intersection of Opportunity" and "Crossroads of the Mojave". Highways 58, 247, old 66, Interstates 15 and 40, the Santa Fe and Union Pacific Railroads all cross or terminate near here. First a rail junction, and later a division point for the Santa Fe Railroad, Barstow relies heavily on operations that include diesel shops and a "classification center", a large fretwork of tracks used for rail-switching. The improvement and development of roads in the 1920's brought a highway trade. Barstow's steady growth as a transportation center climbed sharply with the influx of World War II military operations in the area. The U.S. Marine Corp Supply Center today supplies a 20 million dollar payroll. All these activities and its status as a trade center for several thousand square miles give Barstow an active retail business.

The town's healthy pace of growth faltered during the recession of the early seventies. The closure of Fort Irwin and cutbacks in staff at the USMCSC have

led business and government interests to seek new avenues for growth, and to husband present resources. The prospect of a Fort Irwin reopening is encouraging.

Desert recreation is both work and play for many Barstovians. Motels, recreational vehicle sales, service and supply stores, and related business, along with a BLM Desert Information Station, serve visitors who race motorcycles in a competitive event area nearby, visitors rockhounding in unique surrounding geological areas, visitors to the restored mining town of Calico, amateur archeologists, and many others. Local residents, lacking the developed recreational activities of the type found in Victor Valley, use the desert also.

Many residents are dissatisfied with present BLM vehicle regulation on vehicles--particularly red tape required for staging competitive events. The road definition for wilderness areas and vehicle management is dissatisfying. The damage caused by concentrated use is apparent, but a result of the reductions of land available, many believe. Motorcycling is an important outlet for local users, and an essential outlet for youth, who would otherwise resort, they feel, to destructive activities. Some residents believe that, while local BLM officials enforce unpopular policies, some are attempting to understand the importance of this type of recreation to the economy and local enjoyment. Along these lines, action by the BLM to fence off hazardous mine shafts that cause accidents among bikers was strongly advocated.

Attitudes toward wilderness are negative. A proposed "Mojave National Monument" allied local business and miners in opposition. Residents feel mining interests should be given sway to wilderness values when they conflict. Support for protection of historical and cultural sites was expressed.

The tangle of vehicle regulations and presence of BLM rangers pleases few, but concern about vandalism and noisy motorcycles is growing. Residents in Slash X, near the competitive event area, complain about noise, scarring of terrain and decreased wildlife.

The issue of grazing evoked little comment.

Many are in favor of the construction of the Lucerne Valley power generating plant because of its water benefits; the Mojave River is being depleted by heavy use upstream. A proposed solar demonstration project at the Con-Ed plant near Daggett is lauded by almost everyone here. The use of the desert's most abundant resource for clean energy production is an exciting prospect for growth.

HELENDALÉ (pop. 1,700)

"Men love the desert. Women hate it--sand in the house, dries your skin, blows your hairdo out of shape."

Helendale, halfway between Barstow and Victorville on old Highway 66, neatly displays both the Market Area's historical modes of occupation and lifestyles and the new influences that are transforming the area. Approaching the town from either side, a traveler sees the broad alfalfa farmlands and farmhouses

that lie in the basin of the Mojave River. There is one surviving roadside gas station and grocery among the dozen or more abandoned when Interstate 15 cancelled Highway 66 as a main route. Veering west on Helendale Road at the small post office one passes a wood products industry building, a farm house, and an old school building before crossing a bridge into the Silver Lakes resort community. Here a visitor is greeted by an artificial waterfall that marks the entrance to the resort. Inside the six foot walls, there are miles of paved and sign-posted streets with only an occasional but well-appointed house by them. The concentration of homes begins around the artificial lake, where residents drive golf carts from modern homes to a golf course, tennis courts, or the lavish country club. About ten percent of the planned 3,000 or so lots have houses. About half the houses are occupied full time by retirees or area businessmen, including many building contractors; the other half are owned by weekenders.

The Helendale residents have mixed feelings about their neighbors across the river. Some term them as "Palm Springs rejects" whose profligate use of water is increasing local humidity and whose presence has caused local property taxes to soar. Among the weekenders in the resort are motorcycle users who tear up the desert and trespass on private lands. Others find their new neighbors friendly and enjoy the presence of the country club restaurant and the prospects of new services in the area. Silver Lakes residents feel they have good relations with local farmers.

The permanent residents of Silver Lakes use local facilities for recreation and rarely go into the desert. Their observations of vehicle use on the desert leads many to favor vehicle designations and wilderness areas. They disapprove of activities that would damage environmental conditions, such as the sludge transport project or the generating plant at Lucerne Valley. They had little opinion on mining and grazing.

The Helendale residents include many who are avid desert recreationists. They feel that vehicle restrictions are required to a degree to prevent desert scarring, but vehicle access is necessary to enjoy sightseeing, rockhounding, amateur archeology and a number of other activities. Wilderness designations are approved of for areas that are already inaccessible to vehicles; historical and cultural sites should also be preserved.

They felt that the power plant should be constructed since the area needed water. They also believed that the BLM should focus its energy on careful resource development, rather than the preservation measures many see as its present pre-occupation.

NEWBERRY SPRINGS (pop. 2,000)

"The Barstow Slug is coming."

Sixteen miles east of Barstow on Interstate 40, the town is a scattered settlement of commuters to Barstow and retirees. Among dwellings diffusely spread in

an area between Interstate 40 and the Newberry Mountains are a few realty offices, a gas station/grocery, an elementary school, a post office, and a small mineral processing plant.

Water is Newberry Springs' distinctive resource. Called simply "Water" for years, it supplied early settlers traveling west, and, later, most of the communities east of the town on the Santa Fe line. Amboy and other towns are still being supplied water by railroad tank cars from Newberry Springs. In recent years, water has been used to create an oasis for fishermen, water recreationists and retirees. A startling number of ponds and lakes have been formed artificially--300 by one estimate. Some of these are open as commercial recreational establishments, but most are privately owned, many by single owners who have planted a mobile home and a boat dock on shore.

Preservation of the purity and strength of its water resource dominates local concern. The "Barstow Slug" would deal a death blow to the water supply, residents believe. Similarly, sludge solar drying pools would release contaminants into the water table. Farmers are concerned that the pressures of the residential property market is pricing agriculture out of competition as a land user.

Residents approve more strongly of wilderness and vehicle designations than residents of Barstow. Many are retired and find motorcycles and jeeps an obtrusive presence; they prefer local amenities to desert recreation. They suggest the Newberry Mountains as a possible wilderness area, believing it was mostly inaccessible to vehicles anyway.

HINKLEY (pop. 2,500)

"The trouble with a motorcycle is that the driver has freedom, but not responsibility."

The old settlement of Hinkley survives among the farmlands of alfalfa, melons and other crops irrigated by pumped well water. Its dwellings are scattered in an area between Highway 58 and the Santa Fe tracks. An array of water systems supply modest to poor houses. Prosperous farms surround the area. Most residents commute to Barstow to work; many are retired or on welfare. The disproportionately large welfare population dates back to the efforts of a former school administrator who solicited welfare families when rolls declined years ago.

Retirees and youths on motorcycles fight with each other about noise and trespassing. Desert recreation in the surrounding area is an important family activity, but the motorcycle problem is conceded by many. Vehicle restrictions or regulations are favored to some degree, but not as they are now proposed. Residents share convictions on many desert issues with Barstow.

DAGGETT (pop. 1,500)

"If rumors hadn't got out that this was the preferred site of the division point for Santa Fe and land prices hadn't have gone up, this town would have been Barstow."

The oldest of Mojave River towns, Daggett was established before the mining town of Calico. It was a supply stop for Boron-laden mining wagons from Death Valley for some years, and then benefited from silver strikes nearby. Residents commute to the Marine Corp Supply Center nearby, or to Barstow. Much of the housing in town is older, ranging from "historical" to decayed, the result, many believe, of Barstow's "redlining" of housing financing. Daggett believes Barstow has ambitions to annex it.

Barstow's encroaching influence is exemplified for many in the "Barstow Slug", an infamous mass of pollutants from the diesel shops and residences of Barstow which has slowly been moving down the Mojave River. Evidence from water tests show that it is very close. Residents are understandingly bitter.

Recreational vehicle activity is popular, although residents of the town have been disturbed by motorcycle activity within the city limits. Strong appreciation for desert beauty and solitude is expressed.

MARKET AREA EIGHT

THE EAST MOJAVE

"The Government's just got too much control in the desert."

This Market Area contains one of the smallest populations of any of the Market Areas. The majority of the 1,300 population live along Highway 15 in the towns of Baker (500-700) and Mountain Pass (250). The rest of the population lives south of Highway 15 either in once active railroad towns such as Ivanpah and Goffs which retain populations of 2-50 people, or in isolated ranches and settlements of up to 25 people. All of the communities and isolated settlements in this Market Area are extremely stable in population with the exception of Baker where tourist flux causes a seasonal population change of about 200 people. The older communities in this Market Area have declined in population through the years until a stable population has finally settled in.

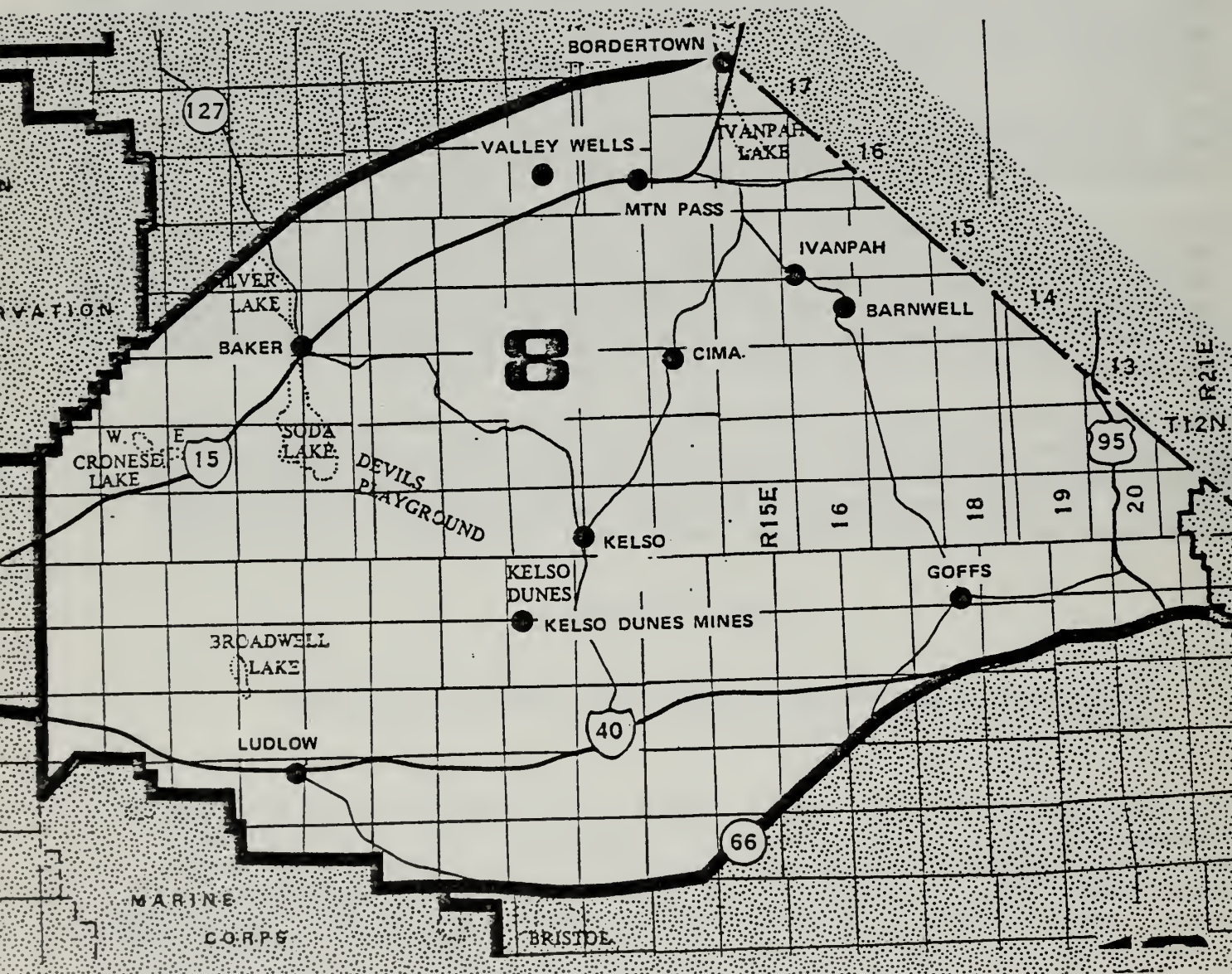
Both the age and economic base of the towns in Market Area Eight vary dramatically. Some towns like Ludlow, Ivanpah, and Goffs sprang into existence during the late 1800's and early 1900's as railroad stations. While others like Baker and Bordertown came into recent being with increased tourist use along Highway 15. Most of the ranches and other isolated settlements scattered throughout the Market Area have been developed over the past fifty years.

The condition of buildings in each Market Area Eight community differ because of the diversity in age and economic bases in these towns. Towns like Goffs, Ivanpah and Ludlow show their passage through desert time with deserted buildings and weathered structures. But towns of newer development like Baker and Bordertown reflect their youth and stable economy with bright new structures.

ISSUES AND CONCERNS

"There are too many incompetent BLM people coming out here and telling us how to run our lives."

Like most desert residents, the people who live in the East Mojave live here because they enjoy the peace, quiet and independence that an isolated desert community provides. A strong love and appreciation of the desert was shown here, most strongly by ranchers. But the most common value expressed in this Market Area was that the BLM lacks common sense--that the BLM has "too much book learning and not enough working with their hands". Specifically residents were dissatisfied with the BLM personnel working on the grazing and tagging programs, for they felt those personnel are educated but have no practical experience in the desert, and are therefore unworthy of trust. Like most desert dwellers, people in the East Mojave were concerned about vandalism.



Especially the ranchers were concerned because they have been experiencing alarming increases in the shooting of their water tanks, and the theft of their windmills. Specific measures to control vandalism was a point on which these residents disagreed. While some felt the government should control vandals, others felt they could handle the problem personally.

While many residents in Market Area Eight felt wilderness and recreation area designations are needed, a stronger concern was expressed that the desert be left open. Basically, most people felt the desert could take care of itself; recreationists could not harm it, so there is no reason for the government to control them.

BAKER (pop. 500-700)

"Some compromise has got to be reached between recreationists and conservationists."

The population of Baker fluxes between 500 and 700 depending on the season. In the summer, when tourist travel through Baker reaches its peak, then the greater population (700) resides in Baker; and in the off-season the population drops to 500. The great population flux occurs because the town is almost totally comprised economically of tourist services. In the off-season the remaining population continues to provide services for the town residents and decreased tourist flow.

Many avid recreationists live in Baker and enjoy the recreation opportunities available to dune buggies, bikes, and rock hounds, both near home and farther out in the desert. Specific recreation sites mentioned by residents were the Dumont Dunes and the area bordered by Baker, Kelso Road, and Soda Lake.

Like many desert residents, the people of Baker want as little government control as was actually required to control vandalism and still protect special areas that should be preserved. Some areas suggested by Baker residents for preservation were: the Soda Mountains, the New York Mountains, Afton Canyon, and Tecopa Canyon.

The one special value expressed in Baker was the need for compromise. The people in Baker can see the management of the desert from many user views. They feel both conservationists and recreationists have valid claims, and the solution is to compromise--provide land for both recreation and preservation. One example people of Baker gave as a way of compromise was the Kelso Dune closure. Where two unique attractions exist in one area, such as the Dumont and Kelso Dunes, one should be opened for recreation use, and one should be preserved.

VALLEY WELLS AREA (pop. 30)

"The BLM's got too much education, and not enough common sense."

Valley Wells is one of many ranch sites in this Market Area. Like the O X Ranch, the Kessler Springs Ranch, and the ranch near Mitchell Caverns, the ranch at Valley Wells is an isolated, one family ranch. The populations on these ranches are very stable, and overall the building conditions are fair.

All of the ranchers who live out here have a great love and respect for the desert. While they do agree that some areas should be preserved (such as the tops of Providence and Mid Hills Mountain ranges), the ranchers hate to see areas they have been going to for years (such as the New York Mountains for hunting) closed off. They also were concerned that designating an area "wilderness" might not be beneficial, either because such a designation would only bring in more people to look at the area, so a greater impact will result, or that the designation is unnecessary because nothing will hurt or change the way the desert now looks. A totally unanimous sentiment expressed by every rancher interviewed in this Market Area is that the BLM lacks common sense. The ranchers resent being advised by BLM on how much and where to graze cattle on the desert, because the ranchers feel the advisors have never lived in the desert and certainly could not succeed in running a ranch in the desert.

The ranchers in this Market Area were also very concerned about vandalism, because a great deal of shooting of water tanks has been occurring. For this reason they felt some small amount of government control in the desert was necessary, but they would prefer to see as little as possible.

MOUNTAIN PASS (pop. 250)

"If only the California BLM could be more like the Nevada BLM, then recreationists could do what they want without a lot of red tape."

Mountain Pass is a Moly Corporation town just north of Highway 15, near the Nevada border. The town contains the mine, its workers and families, and necessary service providing establishments such as the grocery store and gas station. The condition of the community was good.

The town people are avid recreationists who enjoy biking, dune bugging or just walking around in the desert. Therefore they are very concerned about road closures limiting access or worse, areas being designated for no ORV use. They stressed the fact that the public lands belong to the people, so neither miners or recreationists should be kept off the land.

Yet a few people interviewed in town did feel wilderness was a good idea with some modifications, mainly that wilderness areas should be small, like Clark Mountain or Granite Mountain, or limited to just the petroglyphs and historic mining sites.

Though almost everyone we spoke to felt the power lines do affect the scenic quality of the desert, they felt lines are necessary and so the scenic effects are immaterial. No one felt grazing or mining hurt the scenic quality of the desert.

Generally, the residents of Mountain Pass are extremely anti-government. They feel BLM in particular has grown too large and the desert should become state managed rather than federally controlled.

BORDERTOWN (pop. 50)

"We have no interest at all in what happens to the desert."

Bordertown is aptly named for it lies on the border between Nevada and California on Highway 15. Sometimes called Stateline, this very small community consists of a combination cafe/casino/gas station, a hotel for the casino workers, and eight trailers. Some workers live in Las Vegas and commute daily to Bordertown. The town looks new, and is in very good condition with every indication of future growth.

Those employees who do live at Bordertown never venture into the desert and are totally uninterested in what happens to the desert. They had no opinions about wilderness, recreation or the BLM.

IVANPAH (pop. 2)

"The BLM regulations that limit mining are arbitrary, and therefore totally unfair."

The town of Ivanpah is situated about ten miles south of the Highway 68 junction. It was originally a gold camp established about 1870. Mining reached a peak in the late 1870's, though production did continue up to about 1900. The two men who now live in Ivanpah are miners like their predecessors. The only structure still standing in Ivanpah is the house these two miners live in.

Both men were concerned about the government taking too much control in the desert. They very much enjoy their peace and quiet, and most importantly their independence, which they feel will be lost because of too much government control, specifically government control over mining. They felt the problem with government control over mining is that currently the BLM mining regulations are arbitrary and the BLM itself, incompetent. Further, they felt the BLM shows favoritism to large mine companies against the small independent miner.

Another area where these men felt government control was too strong was in recreation control. They did not believe the desert could be damaged from

recreational use and so felt there should not be any desert wilderness designation or road closure. Further they felt that any area closure would be impossible to enforce and that BLM rangers carrying guns were "just asking for trouble".

Not only did the men at Ivanpah feel recreational use does not harm the desert, but that any other activity such as mining and grazing, and the presence of power lines do not usually harm the scenic quality of the desert and that only very intensive usage will result in harm to desert resources.

BARNWELL (pop. 3)

"We don't need a wilderness designation around here cuz there aren't any endangered animals around."

The community of Barnwell consists of three people living in two houses of good condition. The community lies on the dirt road connecting Ivanpah with Goffs. One person works for the Moly Corporation in Mountain Pass, but prefers to live here for peace and quiet. Another works part time in Las Vegas, but also prefers to live here for the peace and quiet.

The people at Barnwell feel recreationists should be able to go where they please on the desert. They feel a wilderness designation is not necessary in the desert, especially in this area because the designation should only be used to protect areas where "lots of endangered animals live", and none live here. The people of Barnwell felt there are no special areas of scenic quality around them. Nor did they feel grazing, mining, or power lines affected the desert.

Unlike most desert residents, who related to us problems with vandalism, the people of Barnwell have not had any such problems.

These people have no special opinions on the BLM.

GOFFS (pop. 25)

"The BLM is spending too much money on too many worthless studies."

Goffs lies about 20 miles southwest of Needles, California. Originally named Blake, Goffs was a junction point for California Eastern Railroad, and by 1900 had turned into a major supply center. Today an air of disrepair has settled upon the community of Goffs which presently contains about 25 people. The residents either work on the railroad, commute to part time jobs in Las Vegas or are retired. One couple manages the town's gas station and bar.

General agreement was expressed by the residents on several points. They felt wilderness designation in some areas is necessary, but not locally. The residents all wanted their area left alone. Everyone was very concerned about

vandalism, but felt it was wrong for BLM rangers to carry guns. No one felt grazing, mining, or power lines hurt the desert. General sentiment was expressed on BLM getting too large and having too much money to spend on too many worthless studies.

The only area of disagreement among Goffs residents was on the point of recreation in the desert. Some people felt recreation should be confined to designated areas, while others thought recreationists should be given freedom to use all the public lands in the desert.

CIMA (pop. 15)

"Grazing is natural, it's been here in the desert forever, and it doesn't hurt anything."

Cima is a very small town located at the junction of the Union Pacific Railroad and Cima Road. A postmaster, store owner and five families that work for the railroad live in Cima.

In Cima the people expressed the most common desert value: they did not want to see any change in the scenery of the area. But these residents did want to see change where they feel problems exist. One problem they want to see handled is the Los Angeles recreationists; too many are coming out into the desert depositing trash there. Residents feel recreationists should only use designated areas--areas that can then be effectively patrolled and controlled.

The Cima residents also want to see a change in the behavior of the fire crew stationed at Hole in the Wall. This fire crew was described by Cima residents as "rowdy and worthless", because several times residents have seen the crew being loud, drunk and driving much too fast.

The residents felt wilderness designations are "okay" as long as they don't prohibit grazing, because grazing has been going on in the desert for a long time without harming it.

No special area of scenic quality was mentioned.

KELSO (pop. 50-75)

"5000 acres is too big for any wilderness area designation around here."

Kelso is a railroad station town south of Cima on Cima Road. The population is very unstable, being made up mostly of railroad people who move frequently up and down the railroad line. The stable population consists of the postmaster and a few long time cow punchers. Because of a highly mobile population, little time or effort is given to town improvements.

The railroad workers use the desert frequently for many types of recreation, yet are mostly unconcerned with what happens in the future to the desert. The stable population in Kelso is older and uses the desert less, but is more concerned with its future. They feel wilderness designation is necessary, but that nothing in this area fits the wilderness qualifications. They also feel recreationists should only use existing roads. People in Kelso are also very concerned about vandalism, and they think more control over desert users is necessary to solve the vandal problem. And though Kelso residents felt power lines, mining, and grazing are ugly, these are necessary and should not be stopped.

KELSO DUNES MINES (pop. 2)

"So what if a lizard goes extinct, it's all part of the natural process."

The mine by the Kelso Dunes is run by two miners/ranchers, one of which lives at the mine site in a trailer home.

These men were naturally very disturbed about BLM possibly closing down grazing and mining near the Kelso Dunes. They felt that cattle could not possibly hurt the animals that live in the dunes system; even if some animals were to go extinct, it is merely part of a natural process. They had a similar view about burros in the desert. These men wanted all the burros taken out of the desert, and method was unimportant. Whether the burros were gathered and transported away or whether they were shot was irrelevant.

These men felt there were too many Los Angeles recreationists using the desert, because the desert was publicized so much. But there should not be any controls or restrictions placed on recreationists because the public land is "the people's" and they have a right to use it as they desire. Yet these men did feel the Kelso Dune closure was good because it keeps people from killing themselves.

Those men felt any wilderness designation in the desert was unnecessary because the desert has lasted this long without protection, and, besides, it is difficult to hurt the desert terrain.

They mentioned no areas of special scenic quality or recreational use. Besides being extremely anti-BLM, these men felt the rangers carrying guns are just more likely to get themselves shot.

LUDLOW (pop. 75-100)

"I don't care if they close areas, I'm still going to ride where I want."

Ludlow sits at the junction of Highway 40 and the Old National Trail Highway. About 75 residents work in tourist services--cafes, motel, and gas stations;

and five families are stationed in Ludlow with the railroad. Both the town structures and railroad buildings are in very poor condition, with many structures appearing abandoned.

There was a dichotomy of expressed views between the railroad and town people. While the railroad people felt wilderness and recreation area designations are needed, the town people were very concerned that the BLM would close up the whole desert. They felt recreationists should have freedom in the desert, except in very fragile areas that should be preserved. They felt Kelso Dune closure was wrong because nothing fragile exists in or on the dunes.

While the railroad workers had no opinion about BLM, the town people were very anti-BLM. These people felt BLM does not listen to ranchers or recreationists. They think BLM should hire people who live in the desert and therefore know the desert. Town residents also feel rangers carrying guns is wrong because recreation groups should police themselves.

Neither town people or railroad workers mentioned areas of scenic quality near them.

MARKET AREA NINE

THE TWENTYNINE PALMS AREA

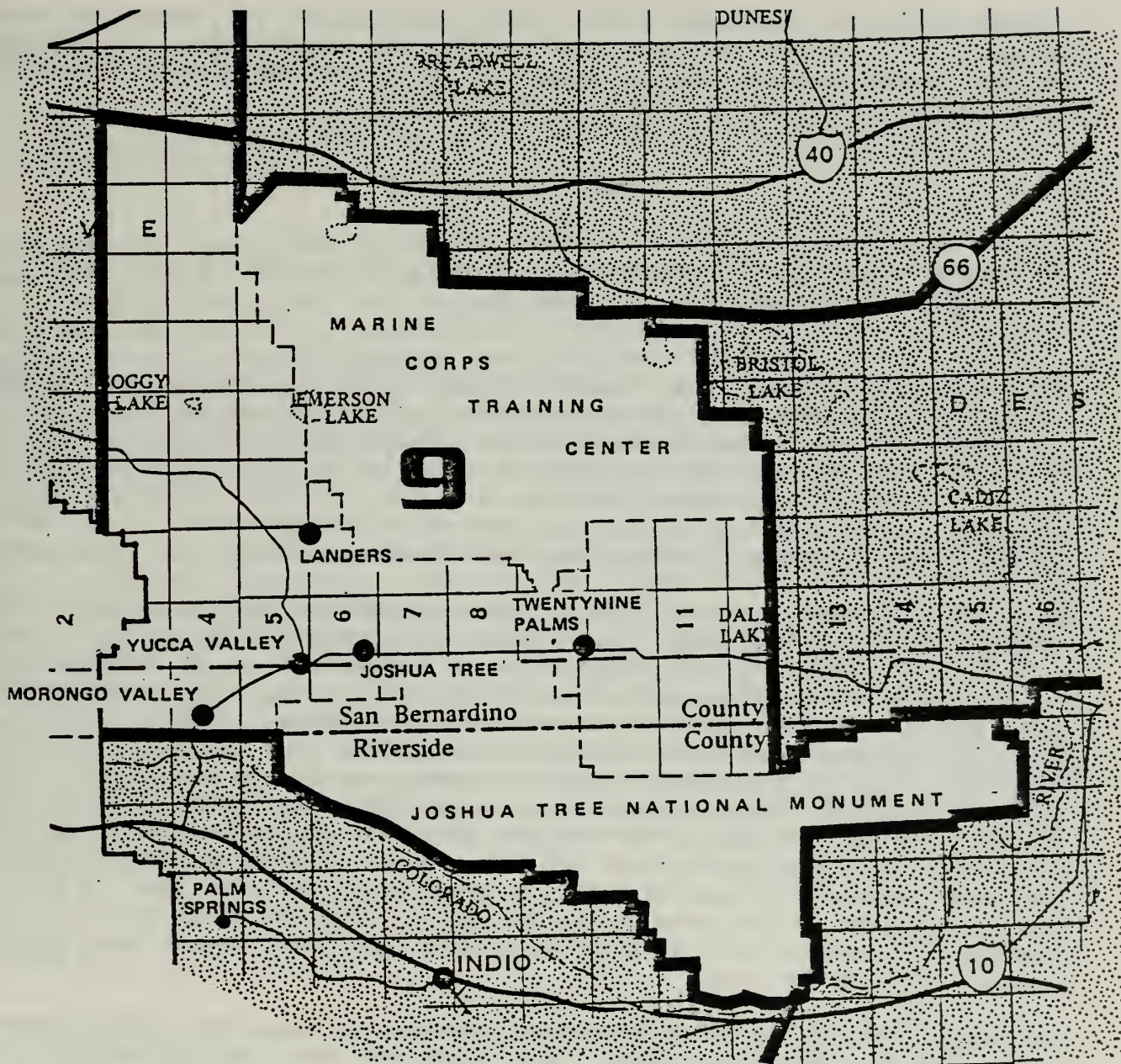
"We will do what we can to keep pollution out."

The Twentynine Palms Market Area lies just east of the San Bernardino Mountain Range. Its main communities of Morongo, Yucca Valley, Joshua Tree, and Twentynine Palms lie along Highway 62, with a few scattered settlements to the north along the crescent between Yucca Valley and Johnson Valley, and to the north of Twentynine Palms in Wonder Valley. The total population for the Market Area is about 26,000.

The area was first settled by independent miners and ranchers. By the turn of the century the Weaver Trail was being used extensively when driving cattle through the Twentynine Palms oasis. But with a string of dry years and land development, the ranches slowly died out. The most successful mines in the area were the Dale mines. These gold mines began operations in the early 1870's and continued to be prominent until World War I. In the later years of the mining operations at the Dale sites the United Greenwater Co. was the main operator. Today many of the area's mines are dormant, waiting until economic conditions again make profitable the small semi-precious and precious stone mines. Today many of these mines remain unmarked and forgotten, presenting a hazard for the unwary recreationist.

The advent of the World Wars and the Korean War brought about increasing changes in the area's development. After World War I, Dr. Lucky Moore recommended the clean air of the Twentynine Palms area as the only death-preventive cure of lung disease in veterans who had been exposed to poison gases. This recommendation brought about the first major population influx into the area. World War II also brought change to the area, though more transiently. The Condor Field near Twentynine Palms was developed during World War II by the Army Air Corp for the training of glider pilots. But, like many other World War II desert airfields, the Condor Field was abandoned by the military shortly after the war ended. The Korean War brought about the biggest force of change in this Market Area with the establishment of the world's largest Marine Corps Training Center near Twentynine Palms in 1952. This training center houses 8,000 Marines and their families, and is one of the largest single communities in the high desert, and the main contributor to the area's economy.

The Market Area began receiving large influxes of population during the late fifties and sixties, as more retired people and second home buyers became aware of the desert's clean air, solitude, low cost of living and unique beauty. Today the communities within the Twentynine Palms Market Area are largely retirement oriented. The only income providing industries in the Market Area are services and construction. A high percentage of residents receiving welfare--almost 15% in some area communities--has incited town fathers to begin wooing light industry to the area. But as the Market Area's communities are concerned with maintaining their current high quality of air, the types of industries they will allow are select. Therefore the process of enlarging the economic base of the area with industry will take some time.



TWENTYNINE PALMS

One large incentive to populating the area was the BLM Small Tract Program, which attracted many to the Twentynine Palms area in the fifties. For a meager sum land could be bought, and retained by building a small structure upon that land. Today many of these structures lie dormant, reflecting the small degree of success the program had in establishing permanent residents.

A large portion of the Market Area's land is occupied by the Joshua Tree National Monument. The parkland was dedicated in 1936, and contains about 800,000 acres. The park's many visitors provide income for the nearby communities' tourist services, and local residents enjoy the park as well.

ISSUES AND CONCERNS

"We've always got along well with the Marines so we don't want the Army coming in and changing things."

The communities of Twentynine Palms Market Area agree on several common issues. All the Market Area's towns are concerned with protecting their scenic quality and their clean air. They looked on heavy industry with disfavor and held similar views towards large scale mining and transmission lines. They almost unanimously favored BLM's proposed programs to protect the public desert land. Wilderness and recreation designations were heartily approved of by all but a few who feared wilderness designation would destroy current usage of the desert.

Many of the communities held similar special concerns. One issue that is becoming increasingly important to the Market Area residents is the area's water supply. The water supply is adequate for an estimated 15 to 20 more years, and residents are looking towards increasing the supply soon. The proposed water route running from the Mojave River area to Palm Springs is a very real possibility, but would mean the Twentynine Palms Market area communities would be required to pay for the pipeline used to divert some of the water to the area. Southern California Consolidated Edison, which proposes a power plant in Lucerne Valley, will pay for some of the costs of diversion to bring water to the plant; many favor the plant construction for this reason. Other residents are wary of the power company's promise of reducing water costs, and also fear the prevailing wind patterns would cause pollution from the plant to sweep down upon the residential communities; for these two reasons opposition to the power plant is present in the Market Area.

The Market Area was also concerned about the need to widen the highway between Joshua Tree and Twentynine Palms. The current two lane road is inadequate for the traffic flow through the area. Most towns in the Twentynine Palms Market Area also showed concern about the proposed Army addition to the Marine Base. They feared the traffic level and the noise from base activities would rise alarmingly, since maneuvers would become year long, as opposed to the current two week period of annual Marine maneuvers. Another over-all concern was expressed about the danger present to unwary recreationists from the unfenced abandoned mines that spot the nearby desert lands. In the past few years deaths have occurred from ORV's falling into the unmarked shafts, and the residents would like to see some program implemented to fence and mark these dangerous mines.

This Market Area was unique in its lack of heavy anti-government sentiment. It also showed little knowledge or disapproval of the BLM. This lack of knowledge most likely exists because residents do not lease public lands from the BLM, nor has the Bureau closed down any nearby recreational areas.

MORONGO-YUCCA VALLEY AREA (pop. 11,364)

"Sure the desert is fragile, all you have to do is look at an ORV area to know that."

These combined communities lie at the entrance to the Twentynine Palms Market Area on Highway 62. Their demographic characteristics are very similar. Both have a high percentage of both retirees, and people unemployed on welfare. Those employed work either in service industries or construction. Both communities receive economic benefits from lying near the Joshua Tree National Monument and Twentynine Palms Marine Corp Base. In both towns the highway is lined by service-providing stores, and most housing lies scattered along the hillsides visible from the highway. Although new construction can be seen around town, mobile homes still play a significant part in the area's housing supply.

The Morongo-Yucca Valley residents come to the area for reasons ranging from health to desert appreciation. They are very aware of the desert's beauty and are concerned with maintaining the desert's fragile qualities. Therefore wilderness and recreation designations are strongly approved in almost a blanket town support. Little distrust of government was shown, possibly because few were familiar with exactly what the BLM is or does. Because the people of Morongo-Yucca Valley appreciate the desert, many spend their recreation time exploring and discovering the desert's varied elements. Some enjoy 4-wheeling, some rockhounding, but most expressed pleasure in hiking around the Joshua Tree National Monument. Because the Monument is so close, these residents do take advantage of its proximity, and very few interviewed had not yet partaken of the Monument's pleasures.

JOSHUA TREE (pop. 2,847)

"We've got to widen the road--too many people are getting killed on it now."

Joshua Tree looks much like the larger communities nearby. Its service providing industries line the highway, with residential areas lying back from the highway in a small town site settlement. Farther back in the hills lie scattered homes. The large number of realtor offices in Joshua Tree attest to the town's growing spirit. This spirit is further exemplified in the residents' desire to see the road between Joshua Tree and Twentynine Palms widened. Only one resident interviewed was against the road widening for he feared it would destroy the small town attributes of Joshua Tree. One such attribute, extremely popular with residents, is Ken and Brenda's Country Kitchen. This small restaurant contains eight or so tables and a short length of counter. But what

this restaurant lacks in room size it more than makes up in quality of food. At meal time residents and visitors line up out on the porch to wait pleasantly chatting until a space opens and they can enjoy a savory home cooked meal.

Being only eight miles from the Joshua Tree National Monument, residents here freely take advantage of the Monument's recreational offerings. These residents have seen firsthand the qualities of an area of desert preserved and recreation-ally controlled; they therefore feel such designations as wilderness and recreation are needed in other areas in the desert. Only one resident interviewed objected to wilderness designation for he felt the desert should be "enjoyed now--not preserved for some unknown future time and people". Similar to Morongo and Yucca Valley, Joshua Tree showed little knowledge of the BLM. Only slight distrust of government control was evidenced.

JOHNSON VALLEY AREA (pop. 8,500)

"I'll take you out and show you what those bikers have done to my desert!"

The Johnson Valley Area includes the communities of Landers, Giant Rock, Flamingo Heights, and Johnson Valley-Timco Acres. These communities lie on the crescent extending between Yucca Valley and Lucerne Valley. Several thousand dwellings dot the landscape on this ridge, many of which are "jack rabbit" homesteads, which are abandoned or only used on weekends. An occasional cafe, gas station, county service building or realtor along Old Woman Springs Road or Landers Road are among the few non-residential buildings in the area. These small communities seem to lack central town sites and depend on Yucca Valley for supplies and services. Residents are predominantly retired and live in homes with water from wells or tanks served by small water companies.

The area was in the past used for grazing cattle, and abandoned water tanks can still be found scattered about today. One community in particular has an interesting background. Timco Acres is a tract of land in Johnson Valley that was bought by the Los Angeles Times and deeded to the employees. Some of these original former Times employees still can be found living here.

In the northern part of Johnson Valley is a large BLM open vehicle area used extensively by competitive event users and independent weekenders. Many Johnson Valley residents are upset with the "indiscriminate packs of loners" who ride off the designated open area onto private property, tearing up roads, and shooting off guns. Some residents even told of bullets whizzing by their heads. Other complaints about these indiscriminate ORV users was that they make a great deal of noise in the middle of the night. Yet the residents do tolerate organized motorcycle clubs and events, for these seem to be self policed and considerate of local people, and lack the objectionable behavior of some unorganized ORV users. The area also faces a problem of vandalism they consider caused by small packs of bikers, and an attitude of vigilante law is developing among many residents.

The area presented a general agreement towards preservation of desert lands, yet a few stressed the need for vehicle access into wilderness areas because most are retired and can only enjoy the desert on a vehicle.

A particular problem with sheep grazing was expressed in Johnson Valley. Some residents noted the destruction of ground cover, property trespassing, traffic problems on the highway, and blowing dust.

Future growth and water needs is a point of differing concern for residents. Most welcome any development which would improve local services, power, etc. A proposed power plant in Lucerne Valley would defray costs of water transport systems to the area, but the nature and extent of its involvement is not generally understood. Need for water and concern for air quality conflict, and lead many to desire alternatives to the utility's help. Another water problem occurred when some well owners were forced by county health authorities to stop giving water to neighbors unless expensive tests were continually administered. These well owners felt the end to these neighborly gestures resulted from county pressure by local water companies losing business transporting to tanks.

Residents showed a special concern about the coyote population in the Johnson Valley area being exterminated. Fewer coyotes have caused the rat population to soar, causing a number of problems. One of the most irritating is the rats' habit of disabling cars by chewing through electrical system wiring.

TWENTYNINE PALMS (pop. 8,423)

"We stopped them putting a transmission line through here once and we'll stop them again if necessary."

Twentynine Palms has long been known for its pure air. Its first major populous came to the area upon doctor recommendation shortly after World War I. Today the town provides services not only for its own residents, but for smaller towns nearby, and also for the Marine Corps Base nearby. The base houses almost 8,000 military personnel, and is the major contributor to the Twentynine Palms economy. But while the community and base are constantly interacting, the town shows a conspicuous absence of certain types of land use (peep shows, massage parlors, and seedy bars) that are normally present in military towns.

Like the other communities along Highway 62, Twentynine Palms has a high percentage of retired people and second home owners. Apparent in Twentynine Palms is the legacy of the 1950's "homesteading" craze. In the early fifties, the BLM opened up public land east of the Twentynine Palms town center to five acre sales, requiring improvements of at least a 20'x20' structure to retain the land after purchase. The effort failed to attract permanent residents and scores of the required homestead structures are still standing. Recently these abandoned or little used cubicles have become increasingly vandal-ridden, posing a problem for local authority, and an eyesore to the general community.

Twentynine Palms citizens are very concerned about maintaining the clean air and scenic beauty of their community. Repeatedly expressed was their fear of transmission corridors being placed through the area. In the past the community has

worked hard to keep such corridors out, and now many vigilantly discourage such future encroachments. The town shows its concern in controlled growth through desiring only light industry that would have little environmental impact, development of locally owned services as opposed to chain interests, and care to avoid "unscrupulous land buyers" who would speculate on the land without proper development.

Like the other communities in the Area, Twentynine Palms is concerned about the dwindling water table. The community exhibits mixed feelings about paying the cost of the diverting pipeline on the Mojave River project, and also show disagreement towards the Consolidated Edisons' proposed power plant.

The community works hard to control their own growth, and generally commends the BLM's attempt to do the same with public lands in the desert. The only exceptions to this sentiment were the few who feared wilderness designation would totally prohibit current use of the desert.

The Marines on base show a diversity in views about the desert. Length of tour of duty coupled with recreational time spent out in the area affect the Marines view on recreation and wilderness designations. Those that do enjoy the desert and appreciate its unique qualities favored the idea of designating recreation and wilderness. But those Marines that were new transfers, or those that had not yet taken the time to become familiar with the desert were totally unconcerned with the desert or any proposed designations that would affect the desert.

Twentynine Palms had many special concerns. They were extremely concerned about widening the road between Joshua Tree and Twentynine Palms, and residents have formed a committee to speed up the road building. Another major concern of the town was fear of the Army's proposal to begin using the Marine base for training maneuvers. The town disliked this proposal because they like the Marines ("our Marines"), and fear the Army's year-round maneuvers--continual bombing, and noise, and top soil upheaval--when currently the Marines only engage in such maneuvers two weeks a year.

Another concern of Twentynine Palms residents was related to abandoned mine shafts. A great number of unfenced abandoned mines lie in the Twentynine Palms area, and unwary recreationists have fallen in and died. The community feels very strongly that the Federal government should fence or some how mark these mines.

Knowledge of the BLM was slightly higher in Twentynine Palms than in other communities of the area. But this awareness was usually limited to past BLM programs--mainly the Small Tract program--and little knowledge of present BLM practices was shown.

MARKET AREA TEN

THE AMBOY - NEEDLES AREA

"The desert should become productive wherever possible."

About 5,000 people live in this Market Area. The population is centered at Needles (pop. 3,900), and in five or six smaller towns, with populations of 300 or less, along Highways 95, 62 and the Old National Trails Highway.

Employment in this area consists mainly of tourist services, with some highway maintenance, railroad, mining or retirement. The only exception is the community of Iron Mountain which is composed totally of Metropolitan Water District station personnel and families.

Though the population is very stable presently, the growth potential in this area is limited. Needles is currently in a population transition that most towns in this area have already experienced. Because of the absence of youth employing industries, youth out migration has become the pattern, and Needles will become a retirement, recreation community. Most of the other area towns that have already passed through this population and employee transition visually reflect the change in abandoned and rundown buildings.

ISSUES AND CONCERNS

"Its all right to think of preservation, but you've got to be practical."

Generally residents of this Market Area were concerned about the effects that intensive recreational use can cause in the desert. They love and respect the desert, and want to see some areas preserved, yet they feel the desert should remain basically open and uncontrolled. Strong concern was expressed in every town about vandalism. Some felt strong fines should be issued; others felt keeping a tight rein on weekend recreationists would solve the problem.

The Amboy - Needles Area residents stressed the need for the desert to become as productive as possible. This means allowing mining, grazing and power lines where they could be productive in the desert. These people feel that when weighing scenic quality against a productive use, the productive use should win out, that energy and product development is of vital importance to the future not only of the desert, but of the U.S.

NEEDLES (pop. 3,900)

"A wilderness designation around us will kill any chance we have for growth."

The town of Needles lies at the junction of Highways 40 and 95, and overlooks the Colorado River. Back in the 1890's, Needles was the second largest town in the California desert next in size to Lancaster. It owed its size to being a supply station for the Atlantic and Pacific Railroad.

The population of Needles has been very stable for the past several years, yet because of a lack of youth employing industries, a youth out migration is considered unavoidable by Needles residents. Needles will then become a predominantly retirement/recreation community. But currently the people of Needles are employed with railroad, tourist services, gas pipe lines, the highway, agriculture, or retired.

The residents of Needles enjoy living by the desert. Some residents enjoy four-wheeling around the desert, others hunting; a great many simply enjoy the spectacular beauty of the desert. Disagreement over what would make a good recreation site was shown in Needles, for while some residents felt the New York Mountains would make an excellent recreation area, others felt the New York Mountains would be better designated as wilderness.

The people of Needles basically agreed that wilderness designations are necessary, but not right beside an urban community, and preferably with an altered title - because the word "wilderness" has very bad connotations. Some suggestions given for areas to be preserved are the Whipple Mountains and Chemehuevi Mountains. The residents were also in agreement about the need to designate recreation areas, and that only existing roads should be used. One suggestion made by Needles residents as to how to control designated recreation areas is to have a speed limit set for recreation vehicles with very heavy penalty fines.

The majority opinion in Needles towards grazing and mining is that these activities do not decrease the visual quality of the desert.

ESSEX (pop. 150)

"I consider myself both a recreationist and conservationist."

The town of Essex lies at the junction of Essex Road and the Old National Trail Highway (Route 66). The 150 population works either at the maintenance station, tourist services, or are retired. The town has an air of deterioration attesting to the town's age and low economic base.

The people of Essex expressed some of the most commonly expressed desert values--they want the desert left unchanged. Yet some residents have seen damage

caused by intensive recreational use in the desert, and therefore feel wilderness designations and recreation area designations are necessary in order to keep the desert from changing further.

Most residents were in agreement about the problem of vandalism in the desert and that some type of control is needed. Most everyone also felt that there were no areas of particular scenic quality nearby. They also felt that grazing mining and powerlines do not hurt the land or beauty of the desert.

A consensus opinion was also shown in anti-BLM sentiment. The residents simply disliked seeing government control over their recreation and private lives in the desert. The residents also disliked the idea of BLM rangers carrying guns, for it was one more sign of increased control.

CADIZ (pop. 50)

"Everybody moved out cause we can't get T.V. here."

The town of Cadiz lies between Amboy and Essex along the National Trail Highway. People either work for Santa Fe Railroad, the Leslie Salt Mine, or other area mines. The town has an air of abandonment which is explained by the recent out migration of people who wanted to live where they could get T.V. reception. The remaining population does not use the desert much for recreation except for rockhounding. There are times of the year when the town is packed with rockhounds, since this area abounds with rocks and minerals.

The people of Cadiz think recreationists should have freedom all through the desert. They feel any wilderness designation is unnecessary in the desert because "nothing can hurt the desert".

No special areas of scenic quality were mentioned. And no opinions about the BLM were expressed.

AMBOY (pop. 25)

"I think all L.A. recreationists should be kept out of the desert."

The town of Amboy lies about 20 miles east of Ludlow on the National Trails Highway. It contains one gas station/cafe/motel, a post office, school, and about five houses, all in very good condition. The town is owned by one man who has lived here for 40 years and has a deep appreciation of the area.

The residents of Amboy are very concerned about recreationists tearing up the desert and feel recreationists should only use designated areas. They also feel wilderness designation is a good idea and mentioned the volcano near town as a good site for preservation.

Amboy residents associate vandal problems with L.A. recreationists, so they feel controlling recreationists will solve the vandal problem. Town residents feel power lines, grazing, and mining all hurt the scenic quality of the desert but are necessary evils.

VIDAL JUNCTION (pop. 21)

"I never heard of the BLM before."

Vidal Junction is located at the junction of Highway 95 and Highway 62. The population works either in tourist services--at one of the two gas stations or one cafe; or the residents work for the State Transportation Maintenance Station. The town appears in good condition, almost exhibiting an air of a fresh white washing.

Most people in town do enjoy recreational activities in the desert during the winter. Their favorite areas are the Turtle and Whipple Mountain ranges. While the town residents believe recreationists should have freedom in the desert; they also believe some areas, such as the Corn Springs, should be protected.

No one felt grazing or mining hurt the desert. And no one expressed an opinion about the BLM.

EARP - BIG RIVER AREA (pop. 300)

"Those people from L.A. need the freedom of the desert to keep from going crazy."

The communities that line the California side of the Colorado River between Lake Havasu and Big River are basically retirement communities. The small communities are actually small trailer parks, where some year round residents live, but most people arrive during the summer for recreation along the river.

Recreation in the desert is limited to driving, hunting, and rock hunting for these residents, who especially enjoy recreating in the Whipple Mountains. A large majority of the year-round residents feel the desert should for the most part be left open with no designated recreation areas. But most people did believe wilderness designations are necessary though no specific sites were mentioned.

Though no one interviewed felt grazing or mining hurt the scenic quality of the desert, most felt that abandoned mines should be filled in with dirt as a safety precaution.

Some people were concerned about the future of property along the river. While some thought the BLM should sell the land so people could build on it, "make something useful out of barren fields"; others felt the BLM should only extend the length of leases so people leasing property would not need to worry about losing their property after a short time.

RICE (pop. 7)

"If they're not controlled, people will dirty the whole desert."

The town of Rice lies along Highway 62 and was once a railroad station for the Santa Fe Railroad. Back in the 1950's when the line was in use, some fifteen workers and their families lived in Rice. But since the line was closed, the only economy left is tourist services. One man owns the gas station and small store that make up the total economic base of Rice, though he claims that his business is still pretty fair on the weekends.

Though this gas station owner enjoys living in the desert, and has done so his whole life, he feels the desert has made him cynical. After years of saving stranded motorists, this man has become disgusted with seeing tourists in the desert. Therefore he feels that weekend recreationists should be controlled but he doesn't want to be closed out of areas he has been enjoying since childhood. He feels that he can survive out in the desert, and some policy maker that sits in an office all day couldn't survive in the desert, so why should he listen to or obey any such policies.

The people of Rice are concerned about vandalism and think some type of control should be implemented.

No one in Rice mentioned areas of scenic quality. Nor did they feel grazing, mining or power lines affected the desert - besides such activities are productive and as the people of Rice feel: "the desert has got to become more productive in the future".

IRON MOUNTAIN (pop. 100)

"If something has become Federal Law, then the Rangers should enforce it."

The community of Iron Mountain is actually the pumping station for the Metropolitan Aqueduct. The community, comprised of 35 workers and their families, lies about ten miles north of Highway 62 at the foot of the Iron Mountains. The town is well kept and very clean.

Iron Mountain residents use the desert a great deal for recreation. Some of their favorite recreational sites were: Buttercup, Sunflower, Glamis, Hole in the Wall, and Corn Springs. They were very much against the idea of designating

recreational areas. Though they felt wilderness designation was a good idea, it did not fit any area around them.

Most residents were very concerned about vandalism and felt the BLM rangers should be enforcing the law - using guns if necessary. But they also believed that organized recreational groups were not the problem because these groups patrol themselves.

No one felt grazing or mining hurt the scenic value of the desert except in the case of large strip mines.

MARKET AREA ELEVEN

THE COACHELLA VALLEY

"I came here to retire because I enjoy the climate and living in a small town, I don't want to see this area turn into another big city."

The Coachella Valley was first inhabited by Native Americans thousands of years ago. The Agua Caliente Indians were named for the hot springs, located in present day Palm Springs, that served as a focal point for the Indians' tribal meetings and activities in the area. The present day Agua Caliente tribe still owns much of the land in and around Palm Springs.

The Valley was intermittently crossed by explorers looking for a route through the Santa Rosa, San Jacinto, and San Bernardino Mountains. Active settlement did not begin until 1849 when goldrush prospectors swarmed the Valley's hill-sides. By 1900, homesteading had begun in earnest in Coachella Valley, and townsites were established at Palm Springs, Indio and Coachella. In the 1920's, the area was rediscovered as an exclusive retreat with mild climate and open spaces. The area's popularity grew, and today the Valley communities have become one of the most popular recreation and retirement areas in the country.

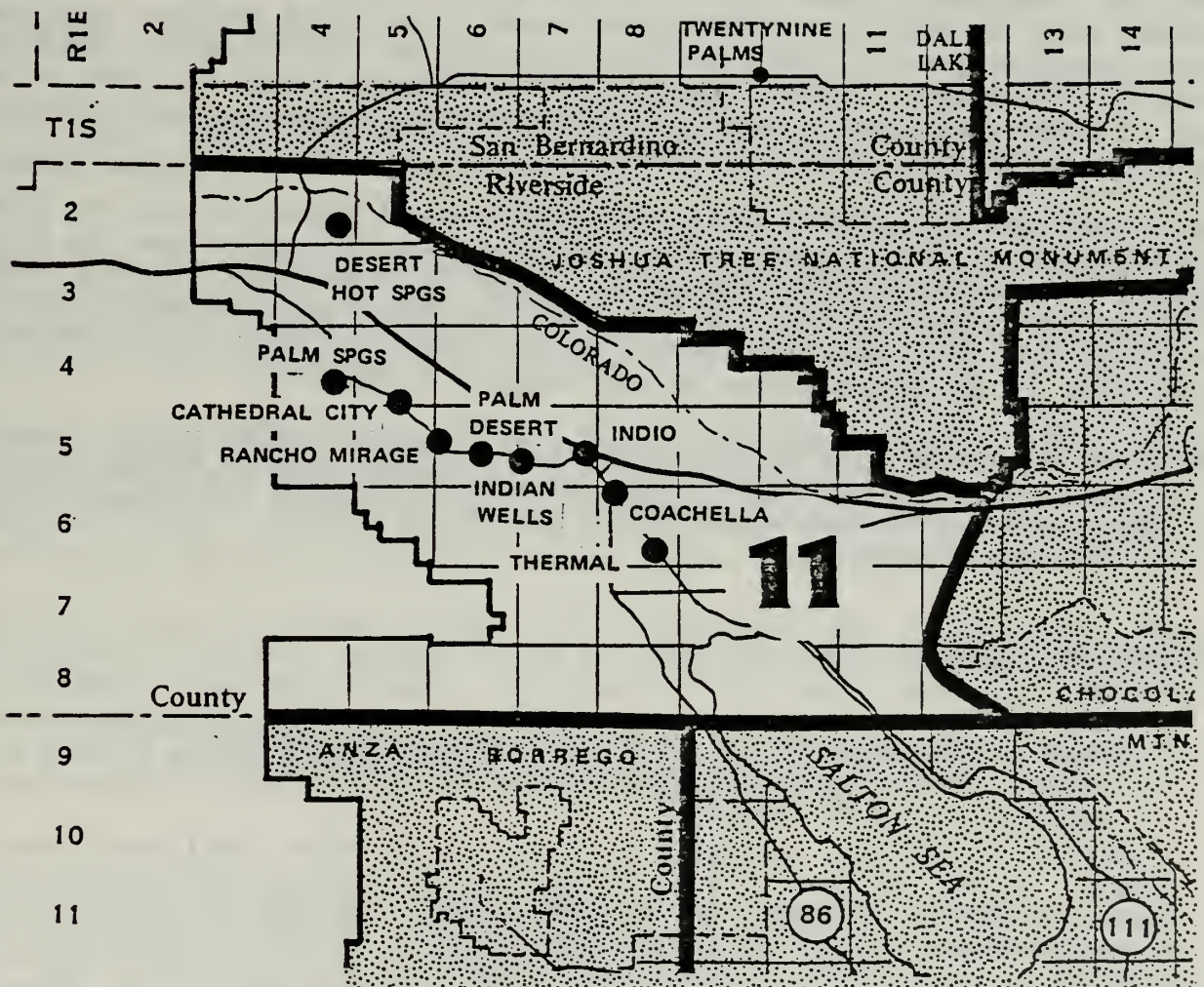
The upper valley's economy is based on tourism, recreation, retirement, and second home vacationing. The lower valley, especially from Indio southward, has an economy base largely supported by agriculture. Since the Coachella Canal was expanded in 1948, irrigation from the Colorado River has made the lower valley agriculturally productive. Its main crops are fruits, vegetables, and livestock. This area also produces over 99 percent of the nation's dates, and Indio holds a nationally famous annual fair celebrating the date crop.

The total Market Area population is over 107,000, making it the second most populated Market Area in the desert next to Lancaster-Mojave. The upper valley's median age is much higher than the lower valley's, for the upper valley has a large percentage of retired residents, while the lower valley houses the service sector and agricultural labor forces of the Valley. Many who work in hotels, restaurants, and domestic services in the upper valley live in the lower valley because of housing costs. In addition, Indio and Coachella have large percentages of migrant labor who come north to work in the orchards and fields of the Valley's labor intensive crops.

ISSUES AND CONCERNS

"Its okay to try and protect the fringe-toed lizard, but not at the expense of further valley growth."

The primary issue of contention in the Valley is growth. Much of the upper valley is attempting to either severely limit growth or stop growth altogether.



COACHELLA VALLEY

These communities want to maintain clean air and a small town atmosphere for retirement. The lower valley communities are pro-growth, interested in expanding not only their agricultural sectors, but their industrial sectors as well. The way Valley communities side on this issue affects their feelings on wilderness designations. Those communities that are against local growth feel the public desert should also be preserved and controlled. The lower valley communities who are pro-growth fear that wilderness designations will infringe on their agricultural lands and hurt jobs.

These same criteria on growth seem to affect the Valley residents' views on a local issue--the fringe-toed lizard. This lizard has been proposed for the endangered list and its habitat in the blow sands is being sought as a protected area. Many upper valley residents felt the blow sand area should be set aside for the lizard while lower valley residents felt the blow sand area was too large, that the lizard should be given a small portion of the area, and the rest used for development. Both areas expressed support for protecting the lizard, but the withdrawal of federal funding for development within the habitat area was of greater concern to lower valley communities, which are contending with problems of housing, jobs, and taxes.

Most residents expressed a similar attitude towards desert recreation. They seemed to enjoy simply studying the desert scenery on a drive down the highway. Little ORV use was shown by residents. The only communities that did show much ORV use were Indio, Coachella and Thermal, but many residents even in these communities felt ORV's were destructive to the desert and should be allocated areas that were either unharmable or already damaged irrevocably.

Many valley residents spoke of transmission lines and their negative impact on the desert scenery. Since many only view the desert from the highway, they felt these transmission lines should either be put underground or in places not visible from the highway.

DESERT HOT SPRINGS (pop. 6,000)

"Back in the early 1900's we used to have good times here--lots of fun. Now nobody knows anyone else, and we don't do things together as a town anymore."

Desert Hot Springs combines the best features of high and low deserts with a 360 degree view of snow-topped mountains, graceful valleys, and painted hills. The first permanent home in Desert Hot Springs was built in 1913 by Cabot Yerxa; he was also the developer of hot mineral pools in the area which he began by reopening an old Indian well. Today the town is world famous for its hot mineral waters and each hotel boasts a mineral bath which is used both by tourists and residents. The population of Desert Hot Springs ranges from 6,000 year-round residents to a total of about 10,000 during the winter tourist season.

The town is slowly growing and residents are carefully watching to see that Desert Hot Springs does not become "another Palm Springs". Local merchants support each other by buying supplies in town at a slightly higher price than could be found in Palm Springs. All the structures seem in good condition and many homes look new or in final stages of construction.

The desire to control growth shown by Desert Hot Springs residents influences their desire to see recreation controlled in the desert. They feel the desert is fragile and only areas where no plant, animal or scenic quality can be hurt should be opened to recreationists. This desire to protect the desert causes local residents to favor wilderness designations. They often pointed proudly to the nearby wildlife refuge to show they believe in preservation of the desert, and have taken preservation steps on their own.

Little knowledge or concern was shown towards desert grazing or mining, but a great deal of dissatisfaction towards the current position of transmission lines in the local desert was shown. Residents want the lines either put underground or hidden in mountain ranges.

PALM SPRINGS (pop. 30,000)

"I'm glad I could move here but now I'd like to shut the door behind me and not let anyone else in."

Centuries ago, the Cahuilla Indians, ancestors of the Agua Caliente Indians, used the present day site of Palm Springs as its focal point of activity. These Indians were named for the natural hot springs that still flow today bringing many tourists and recreationists to the area.

At the turn of the century when Congress and the Secretary of the Interior were deciding on Indian Land Allotments, Palm Springs became a quiet resort town that grew both in size and importance until the 1930's, when it was described as "a recreational oasis". Section allotments were finally made and today much of the land in Palm Springs is owned by the 150 member Agua Caliente tribe.

Today Palm Springs has become the well-to-do recreationists' and retirees' desert playground. The main support of its economic base is providing services for these recreationists and retirees. While most of the town's buildings and residences opulantly reflect a high income level, a small section at the north end of town shows a lower level of income. This area is predominantly black and most residents are Palm Springs clerks and domestic workers.

The checkerboard land ownership pattern in Palm Springs requires the Indians and the City of Palm Springs to work together on all plans and zoning. Growth in Palm Springs is consequently very regulated and controlled. The citizens of Palm Springs seem to approve of this controlled growth. They want to slow down growth, and many think all growth should be stopped; this sentiment is affecting other issues. The town's sewage facilities have reached maximum use, and growth must either be stopped, or new sewage systems installed. This issue is currently causing upheavals in both the pro and the con-growth ranks. This view may exist because many residents move to Palm Springs to retire from hectic city life, and do not want to lose the quiet, small town qualities of Palm Springs.

This question of growth was the only general value that was not one of general agreement in Palm Springs. The residents of the north end wanted to see growth

in the hopes that more development would improve the job market. But in all other views concerning conservation and preservation in the desert, there seemed to exist a city-wide agreement.

Use of public desert land by Palm Springs residents was very low, though many spoke of driving down the highway and enjoying the scenery. This type of recreation seemed to affect the residents' response to transmission lines, for they felt the lines should either go underground or be hidden away from the highway.

The Palm Springs residents again expressed almost a blanket approval on the issue of wilderness designations. They felt the desert was extremely beautiful and fragile; therefore it needs to be protected and preserved.

One special concern of the area was about the fringe-toed lizard of the nearby blow sand area. Residents seemed concerned that the species was likely to become extinct and felt it should be protected.

Besides the special concern over the fringe-toed lizard and the overloaded sewage facilities, Palm Springs residents were concerned about the congestion of Highway 111. This highway passes through the center of town and continues eastward to several communities. The residents are upset with the traffic congestion caused by both the traffic overload and the slow driving elderly people on the two-lane road. Residents very much want to see the highway widened.

RANCHO MIRAGE (pop. 6,000)

"I have no complaints about the way the desert is managed, you guys (BLM) must be doing okay."

The city of Rancho Mirage is situated in the Coachella Valley, which lies between the San Bernardino Mountains and the Salton Sea. Most of its 6,000 residents are retired, many of whom live here only through the September to May months, then go back to their hometowns for the hotter months of the desert summer.

The economy, like most in the upper valley, is primarily service oriented, providing for recreationists' needs and comforts. The city has grown rapidly in recent years, providing housing for a Palm Springs-level of living at a slightly lower cost. Yet the cost is still too high for many who work in the service sector, and so they are forced to live lower in the Valley, most often in the Indio area and then commute to work in Rancho Mirage. The housing problem has grown even more critical since a moratorium on building in the city. This moratorium is a indication of how Rancho Mirage feels towards growth. They are striving to maintain the attributes that a small community usually has, such as peace and quiet, low pollution, and high scenic quality.

These qualities that brought the residents to the area are the same ones that they enjoy in the surrounding desert. These people enjoy driving through the desert just to look at the unique scenery. But though few were ORV users, most felt recreation designation was necessary in order to provide areas for ORV use,

while still maintaining other areas of quiet and solitude. Many spoke not only of the noise caused by ORV's but also of damage they do to the top soils, plants and animals. These people felt that wilderness designations were necessary in order to preserve areas of scenic quality in the desert.

The people of Rancho Mirage seem to have a high degree of scenic awareness. They spoke with displeasure about the transmission lines marring the landscape, and therefore desire to see the lines put underground.

Like other area residents, the people of Rancho Mirage felt the fringe-toed lizard should be protected, but some of its habitat should be given up for development.

CATHEDRAL CITY (pop. 1,500)

"Palm Springs is hungry for us."

Nicknamed the "City of Perfect Balance", Cathedral City was given its original name from nearby Cathedral Canyon. Cathedral City is a slim unincorporated area situated between Palm Springs and Rancho Mirage. Its economy is based on recreation and industry. Presently Cathedral City is striving to emerge as a distinct incorporated town. The retail center of Cathedral City is busy with trade that cannot locate in the nearby towns which have stricter ordinances. Most residents work in industry here or commute to other parts of the valley for work. More lower cost housing is available in Cathedral City than its neighbor towns, yet residents feel the housing is still overpriced. Cathedral City is unique in the valley for its varied economy. With both industry and commerce, and various levels of housing available, Cathedral City provides a living experience similar in its variety to urban areas outside the desert. Yet residents fear this balance is threatened by Palm Springs and Rancho Mirage, either of which might annex the affluent residential area and industrial section.

Residents enjoy recreating in the desert, but since the closure of the area near the county dump site, the local ORV users have no where to go. These users felt recreation designation was good because it encourages vehicle use in the areas that will have the least impact on the desert. Wilderness designation is generally supported in Cathedral City, but is not given great concern. Residents felt no local areas were appropriate for wilderness designation.

Special concerns were also mentioned in Cathedral City. Like other Coachella Valley communities, Cathedral City is concerned with traffic congestion on Highway 111. It also shares valley concern over the fringe-toed lizard and the large habitat area limiting valley growth.

PALM DESERT (pop. 15,000)

"I wish I could afford to live here, since I work here."

Palm Desert was one of the later developed areas in the Coachella Valley, and did not really become important until the junction of the two main highways in the area.

Today Palm Desert is the largest of the Palm Springs cove communities. Its Chamber of Commerce boasts 15,000 permanent residents, and 6,000 winter time residents who come to "seek the sun". Besides its range of recreational facilities, the city offers some unique cultural opportunities. The Living Desert Reserve covers 1,000 acres of natural desert. The reserve has several trails with guide book accompaniment, plus exhibit rooms for desert plants and animals. Palm Desert also provides higher education for the valley, with the College of the Desert. This community college has a current enrollment of 12,000 and will soon add on a cultural center that will feature a large theater and arts center.

Though there has been no moratorium on building in Palm Desert, growth is strictly controlled. Like its neighbor communities, Palm Desert has only a small amount of low cost housing, which forces many service sector employees to commute from the Indio area.

Palm Desert expressed values similar to its neighbor cities. Its residents believed wilderness designations were necessary to protect the desert, and recreation designations were good for allocating land to both ORV users and those who seek solitude and quiet in the desert. They also felt the fringe-toed lizard should be preserved, but its proposed habitat area was too large. And Palm Desert residents, like most other Coachella Valley residents, felt transmission lines are an eyesore and all possible means should be exercised to lessen the lines' impact on the desert scenery.

INDIAN WELLS (pop. 1,200)

"I know some people who would like to talk to you if you could get past the security gate."

Indian Wells is located between Palm Desert and Indio. Its name originally belonged to Indio where an old Indian well was used by travelers to quench their thirst on the long desert trail. It is an exclusive residential area employing domestic and other service sector workers from nearby Palm Desert or Indio. Residents live mainly in two enclaves of houses, one a security community with a visitor gate and guards. Most residents are retired and maintain a very high standard of living. The community abounds with golf courses and tennis courts with clubhouses. The city incorporated to protect this exclusive retirement community and the new city buildings mirror the resident's high income level.

The citizens are very concerned about protecting what they feel is a proper environment. And the city has often been to court on local issues. A typical case was one where the city went to court to prevent a gas station from erecting a 70 foot tall sign.

Unlike the other communities from the upper valley who want to stop growth, Indian Wells has many construction projects under way. One by the Alaskan Teamsters is clearing a palm grove for 500 units of retirement dwellings.

Though the city is very concerned about local issues, the larger desert issues receive less attention. They appear favorable to wilderness designation, but many feared overzealous environmentalism might stifle the entrepreneurial opportunities that gave many of them their success.

Few seem to be frequent desert recreationists, and concern over recreation designation was minor. One resident suggested a way to manage public lands in the desert was a "use ratio method", in which land allocated to a function was equal to the percent of people who partake of that activity.

COACHELLA (pop. 8,000)

"BLM--the bad guys, huh?"

Coachella, the "Gateway to the Salton Sea", sits at the crossroads of U.S. Interstate 10 and State Highways 86 and 111. The town is also situated on Southern Pacific Railroad's main line. At the turn of the century date growing began here, and today Coachella helps the Valley to grow 95% of the nation's date crop. Being the "hub of the Valley's agriculture industry", Coachella grows over forty crops, the largest being cotton which grosses one million dollars in the valley per season. The city has long been the headquarters for the Valley's various utility firms, gasoline distributors, farm implement stores, and packing sheds. But even so, it has been losing growth to Indio for decades. To reverse this loss Coachella has begun seeking industrial expansion, and has zoned large areas of city land for industrial use.

Low cost housing exists here in a higher proportion than the rest of the valley, and a large proportion of its Mexican-American residents live here and commute to service sector jobs in the higher valley communities.

The city's strong pro-growth sentiment differs from much of the valley residents who desire little or no growth. Though growth interests are usually against wilderness designations which would close off large desert areas to development, many of Coachella's residents seemed to approve of desert preservation. They also favored recreation designation as long as such designations did not interfere with the popular use of desert land to the south for family outings. These users feel very strongly that vehicle activity in proper desert areas is an outlet for youth, to keep youth from getting into trouble and starting vandal problems.

No special concerns were expressed.

INDIO (pop. 20,000)

"I would like to put the person who dreamed up the fringe-toed lizard habitat in a habitat in the arctic."

Indio was originally named Indian Wells, but was renamed the Spanish name for Indian by railroad agents.

Today Indio is the capital of Coachella Valley's agricultural empire. It is situated in the southern end of the Coachella Valley with a makeup completely different from the upper valley communities. Indio's economy is based on agriculture, and less on retirement, recreation and tourism; therefore its median

age is much lower. The main crops are citrus and dates, but with high land taxes and labor costs Indio cannot compete with Texas and Florida, so most of its produce is shipped abroad, often to Japan. Like much of the Valley, low cost housing is at a premium, and with so many young families this housing problem is becoming acute in Indio.

Because Indio has a different economy base, its atmosphere is also different. Instead of plush stores lining the main street, set to entice tourists, date palm groves and agricultural sales and service stores are prevalent. The large date crop gave rise in 1910 to a yearly fair. The fair has become an annual event with an Arabian night theme and a "Scheherazade" is selected as queen.

Indio is much more growth oriented than the upper valley. The agricultural industry in Indio is pressuring the city to actively solicit light industry. Indio feels the climate and water resources combined make the area very desirable for light industry, and have begun seeking out this added economic support.

Although Indio residents expressed appreciation for desert beauty, some felt the environmental issues are being used as a shield by many upper valley people who want to stop growth and fence themselves off from the incoming world.

There do not seem to be many ORV users in Indio, but those that do ORV in the desert are unhappy about the sand hill closures in Imperial County. But most residents agree with recreation designations, citing the destruction of desert terrain and its resultant erosion problems caused by ORV overuse-primarily motorcycle.

Wilderness designations received much the same response from residents. Little strong pro or con sentiment was expressed, and the concern was centered on the wilderness designation possible infringement of agricultural lands or jobs in the Indio area.

The fringe-toed lizard is viewed by Indio residents in much the same light as by other Valley people. Indio feels the lizard needs to be protected but not at the expense of developable land, and the withdrawal of federal financing funds.

THERMAL (pop. 6,000)

"You wouldn't make a wilderness area out of the orchards, would you?"

Local historians say Thermal was given its name because as a railroad siding in the late 1800's, it was so hot. Later, when the Colorado River was channelled nearby, the area began agriculture production in earnest. Today agriculture remains Thermal's main industry and fruit and vegetable packing plants in and about town attest to this fact. The crops grown around Thermal and the lower valley are very labor intensive-products such as dates and citrus which are grown in orchards and vineyards. This labor intensive agriculture lures many migrant workers to the area who either live on the farms in housing provided by growers, or in Thermal's modest homes.

Farmers live either on their ranches or in homes in the larger towns north--very few live in Thermal. Farmers are beset with increasing costs, particularly

labor costs, and competition from other citrus regions, as well as the potentially crippling "160 acre limitation" proposed by the Bureau of Reclamation. While few profess to recreate in the desert, most farmers agree that measures to ensure protection of vulnerable resources is necessary. The idea of wilderness designation appeals to them in principle, but many fear that it will be used, in practice, as a kind of "160 acre limitation" on mining and grazing concerns, preventing feasible exploitation of these resources.

Desert recreationists in the area include four-wheel drive and off-road vehicle users who are very aware of current BLM vehicle management. Some have stopped this activity because of the BLM restrictions, feeling the presence of zones and fences destroys the freedom that made the activity worthwhile.

Agricultural laborers, many of which are migrants, expressed appreciation of vulnerable desert resources and support for vehicle management and wilderness designation programs; most said the support of their families left little additional income for the purchase of desert recreational vehicles.

MARKET AREA TWELVE

THE DESERT CENTER-BLYTHE AREA

"Around here everything revolves around agriculture."

The first portion of this market area to be settled was the Palo Verde Valley, which began agriculture production in the early 1900's with the advent of the Palo Verde Dam and Irrigation System. General Patton used the northern section of the market area extensively during World War II for desert terrain training maneuvers, developing fields at Rice and Blythe. Military maneuvers were discontinued at the end of the war, and soon after the airfields were abandoned. Today many of the trails and roads Patton's troops cut on the desert surface remain visible over much of this area. Mining came to the area in 1948 when Kaiser moved its iron ore operation to Eagle Mountain. Today the mine is still producing and its company town, with 4,000, holds the second largest population in this market area. Though mining and tourist trade form part of the economic base, the largest income producing sector remains agriculture.

The Desert Center-Blythe Market Area contains a very small population situated in six communities, all within Riverside County. The Market Area lies along the eastern border of the CDCA and takes as its eastern-most border the Colorado River. Along the river lies a cluster of four of the market's six communities. Blythe is largest, with 7,000. The nearby three settlements, with populations of 150-300, depend upon Blythe for most supplies and services.*

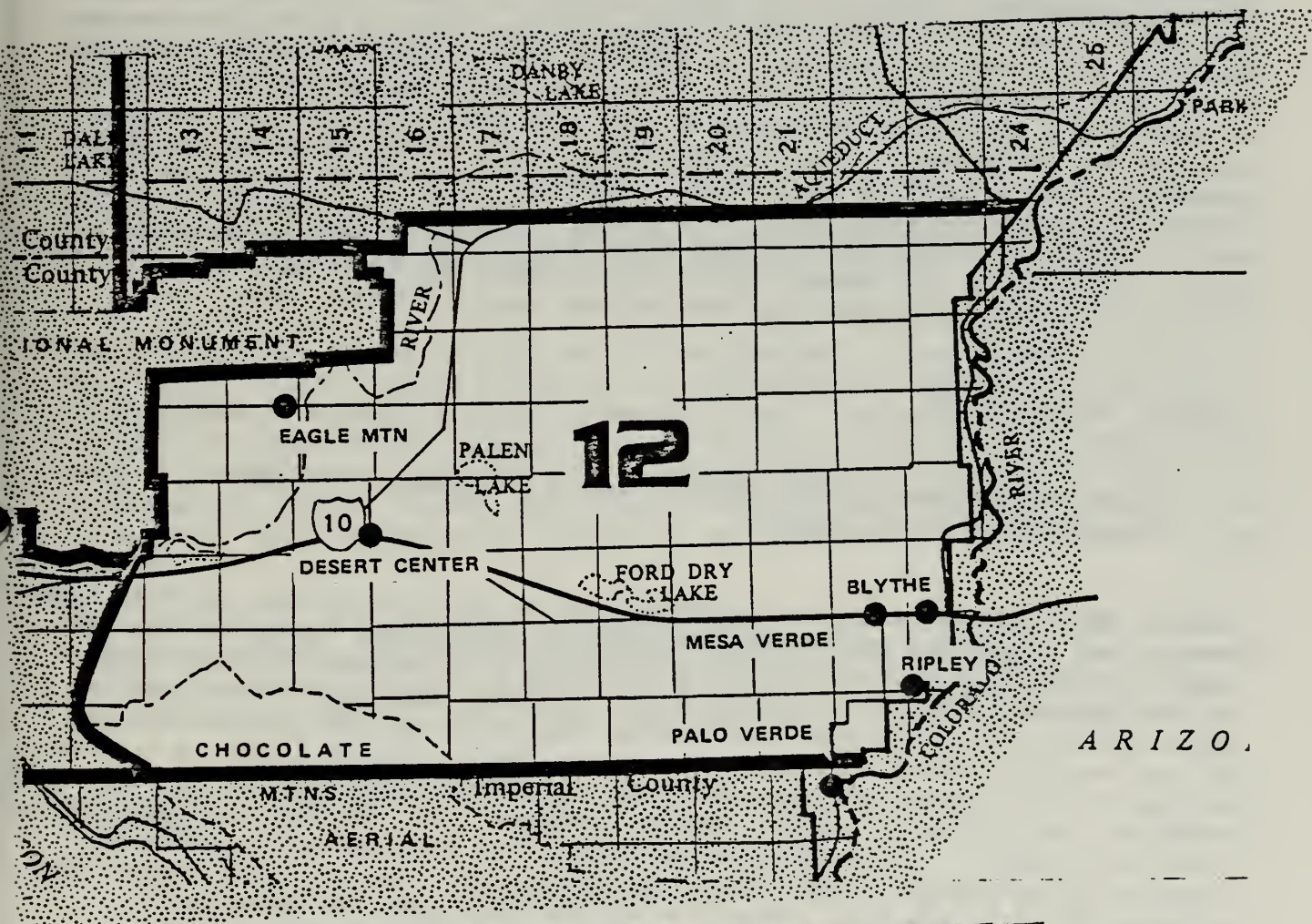
The condition of town buildings vary in this market area, depending upon the age of the community and its economic stability. A marked difference is seen between the condition of buildings in Eagle Mountain, a relatively new community with an extremely stable economic base and population, and the condition of buildings in Ripley, much older, suffering from an unstable income base and losing population. The only community where future growth seems likely is Blythe, and even here the growth rate will probably be small.

ISSUES AND CONCERNS

"We agree with preservation--we even donated money to preserve the intaglios."

Most Market Area Twelve residents are avid desert recreationists, and express a deep love and appreciation for the desert regardless of whether they moved to the area for a job or the climate, or were raised here.

* Palo Verde, because of its borderline location and similarity to Market Twelve's communities, has been included in this report.



DESERT CENTER-BLYTHE

The degree of visitor use in their area seems to affect how the different communities feel towards recreation designations. Those towns that depend upon tourist trade for a substantial portion of their income want no vehicle restrictions, fearing curtailed visitor use and a resultant loss in income. Also, local users fear damage to their own desert enjoyment.

Other communities with little tourist travel, such as Eagle Mountain, are much less adamant in their opinions about designations.

A greater consensus exists on the issue of wilderness designations. Almost everyone expressed a favorable attitude towards the idea. Visiting the desert frequently, many people have come to understand how fragile its beauty can be. Residents were very much against the proposed coal-fired plant nearby, fearing it would pollute their environment. These same residents favored the building of a nuclear plant nearby only because they were convinced the plant would not endanger the environment. The Blythe-Desert Center residents are especially concerned about preserving small areas of special historic or scenic quality. Blythe displayed this attitude by donating money to help the BLM fence off the nearby intaglios to protect them from vandalism. Even Ripley, which fears any type of designation that means increased government control, feels vandals should be controlled because they are ruining historic desert sites.

BLYTHE (pop. 7,000)

"I go to the desert in the winter, but in the summer I go with everyone else to the river."

Blythe came into prominence in the early part of the century when the Palo Verde Dam and new irrigation system made agriculture productive. Blythe is the principal city of the Palo Verde Valley and located on Interstate 10, the largest eastern port of entry to California. The unusually wide main street is a reminder of when the old highway ran through the center of town. With over one million vehicles annually entering the United States through Blythe, a sizable portion of its economy and employment base is derived from tourist and recreation services. Agriculture, however, remains dominant. The fertile Palo Verde Valley, with first rights to the California portion of the Colorado River, which it shares with the eastern Blythe County Water District, has the water supply that has made it one of the most productive agricultural areas in the state.

The residents of Blythe are pro-growth and so fear any wilderness or recreation designations that would hinder the city's growth. Many town residents also dislike the recreation designation because it would limit their enjoyment of the desert in the winter, and possibly cut their tourist trade in the summer.

The residents are aware of the fragility of the desert environment, however, and do agree it requires some protection. An example of this conservation attitude is the town's vehement protest against the proposed building of a coal-fired plant nearby because of the danger to the environment. Because they are conservation minded, they are firm believers in clean energy development. This belief, coupled with a pro-growth desire, makes the possibility of a nearby

nuclear plant construction a welcome idea to Blythe's people. The only divergent opinion on the proposed nuclear plant came from the agricultural community, who fear the local water supply and table will be adversely affected.

The Chamber of Commerce further demonstrated Blythe's conservation attitude by cautioning out of town recreationists about desert damage. The Chamber also donated \$100 to enable the BLM to finish fencing off the nearby intaglios, in order to preserve these unique desert features.

Some concern over vandals was mentioned, but the problem seemed to be caused by local users rather than visiting recreationists. One special problem the agricultural community faces is with vandals shooting the farm and irrigation equipment left out overnight and weekends.

RIPLEY (pop. 150)

"We've got vandal problems--they will destroy any desert structure--whether of historical value or just private property."

The community of Ripley, within the agriculture belt, lies between Blythe and Palo Verde. Ripley's main employment is agricultural. Residents either work on the farms or at one of Ripley's several gins. The town depends on Blythe for all its services and supplies, except those available at the building serving as general store, hardware store and post office. The only other town buildings are bars or homes, and without exception these structures convey years of neglect, with chipped paint, doors and walls askew, and junked cars sitting nearby.

The residents were mostly very anti-government. They feared any type of designation that would bring more government control into the area. The exception was the desire expressed by some of the grave need to control vandals in the area before they destroy the desert landscape and its historic structures.

PALO VERDE (pop. 300)

"We've got some real government haters, but most people realize we need government control."

The sleepy agricultural town of Palo Verde lies along the main road between Blythe and Imperial County communities. The Colorado River flows by many residents' back doors, and provides not only a beautiful backdrop, but many recreational opportunities as well. Visitors using these provide Palo Verde with an important local industry. The area is known as one of the best rockhound spots in California, and offers enjoyment to others who fish, hunt, or enjoy water sports. The residents of Palo Verde were split between wanting increased desert management, and wanting less government control in the desert. Some who were against wilderness and recreation designations felt these were unnecessary because ORV use and other types of recreation do not damage the desert in any

way. Others who felt ORV use definitely threatened the desert's beauty with destruction, also felt wilderness and recreation designations were absolutely necessary. The town's rod and gun club, an active agent in community conservation, works hard to keep natural elements of the desert unharmed through clean up campaigns, and diligent work for wildlife refuges and conservationist hunting regulations. Residents were especially concerned with seeing stronger regulation of the river users to allow a more multiple use-oriented recreation area.

MESA VERDE (pop. 200)

"I stay away from recreation areas 'cause I see enough tourists working here on Highway 10."

Mesa Verde grew up along the new Highway 10. It is an outgrowth of Blythe, a few miles west, and depends on that town for all services and most supplies. Some residents work the tourist trade along the highway in gas stations or cafes. Others work in Blythe or the surrounding agricultural community. The majority of residents live in mobile homes, which give the settlement an air of recent occupation, and, as yet, no stable community structure.

As in Blythe, residents favor growth and fear restrictions that would endanger it. They do use the desert often for recreation, and have learned to appreciate its beauty.

DESERT CENTER (pop. 300)

"I refuse to talk to a government representative--it would just be a waste of my time."

Desert Center, an isolated community that lies along Highway 10, provides a much needed rest stop for the desert traveler. It offers services of a gas station, post office, grocery store and a cafe/bus station. Many residents work up at the Kaiser Mine on Eagle Mountain, and most of the remaining population is retired.

Extremely anti-BLM, few residents were willing to express their views. They severely dislike the idea of government telling them where they can or cannot go in the desert, though only a few actually sought recreational enjoyment in the desert. They rarely expressed appreciation for the desert's scenic quality. They did approve of any form of productive desert use.

EAGLE MOUNTAIN (pop. 4,000)

"We don't know much about the rest of the desert, we stick to this area."

The mining community of Eagle Mountain developed when Kaiser moved its iron ore mining operation here in 1948. Isolated from any major population center, it is a self-sufficient company town, with residents employed either in the mines or as service providers.

The Eagle Mountain people are avid recreation users who, though they came here specifically for the job, have learned to enjoy the beauty and recreational opportunities the desert provides. Isolated from vandals and intensive recreational use by outsiders, they believe wilderness designation is necessary for all natural environments including the desert, but they do not approve of recreation designation. They showed little familiarity with BLM. No one expressed dissatisfaction with past BLM management practices.

MARKET AREA THIRTEEN

ANZA BORREGO

"I would rather live here than anywhere."

The Anza Borrego Market Area is almost totally comprised of the Anza Borrego State Park. The Park covers 400 square miles of desert and mountain area in one of the most scenic portions of the California desert. The park once operated as two separate parks: the Anza Desert State Park and the Borrego State Park. In 1957, they became one park. Private land gifts occasionally increase its size.

The area was homesteaded during several moderately unsuccessful dry-farming attempts in the late 1800's and early 1900's. Today the only communities in this market area are Borrego Springs and Ocotillo Wells. These small communities are bounded either completely by the State Park or a combination of the Park land and BLM land. Both communities have limited economic bases comprised of tourist services and retirement. Borrego Springs, the larger of the two communities with a population of about 1,000, holds 83% of the total population of the market area. It is retirement oriented, and encourages tennis club-type development for a "Palm Springs" effect. Its town structures are well kept and the town center especially exudes an air of controlled growth. Yet it is difficult to get a feeling for the town's actual size because there are parts of the community spread out up to a couple miles from the town's center.

Ocotillo Wells is much more compact than Borrego Springs. It has a population of about 150 people who are mostly retired. The settlement has a few small combination stores/gas stations that bear signs of their hectic weekend use. Behind these stores can be seen scattered homes and trailers. Residents travel to larger towns thirty minutes to an hour away to buy supplies or services. They rarely use the closest town of Borrego Springs because its one grocery store is too highly priced for them.

Directly across the two-lane highway from Ocotillo Wells lies a BLM ORV open area where large numbers of ORV users come to ride on holidays and weekends. During these times the stores are packed and the area buzzes with activity. After the weekends the crowds go back home to San Diego or the L.A. area, and the Ocotillo Wells residents relax and appreciate the quiet and isolation. But as one woman explained, "by the weekend we are ready to enjoy the crowds and all the activity." There are a few newcomers to Ocotillo Wells who dislike the noisy crowds, but this view is definitely not held by the majority of long term residents.

Borrego Springs has a totally different tourist cycle. The tourists who come through Borrego Springs sprinkle through town in small numbers. These tourists come to visit the Anza Borrego State Park and, as one resident explained, "they come to look at the scenery and historical sites".

ISSUES AND CONCERNS

"We don't see much of Borrego Springs people--they don't come here to Ocotillo Wells, and we can't afford to go there."

The values and concerns expressed by these two communities differed noticeably. While an almost unanimous expression of preservation for the desert was shown in Borrego Springs, the people at Ocotillo Wells felt the desert was not at all fragile and could take care of itself. Therefore, while the residents of Borrego Springs favored recreation and wilderness designation, the residents of Ocotillo Wells felt the whole desert should be open to recreation use. The overall feeling in Ocotillo Wells seemed to be "leave the desert alone, let it stay as it is currently". These residents felt very strongly that the San Diego Highway Patrol and the State Park rangers were working together to harass the ORV users that come to the open area nearby by giving tickets needlessly. The residents feel these practices of the government officials were unfair and were causing the ORV users to travel to other open sites where they could enjoy their sport unharassed.

Vandalism was almost nonexistent in either Borrego Springs or Ocotillo Wells. One Ocotillo wells resident said the only problems of destroyed property were caused by ORV users who did not know the rules, and who were unfamiliar with private property lines. And the problem could be solved by explaining these points to ORV users when they buy their vehicles or get licensed, many felt.

Neither community showed much concern over the issue of transmission lines. They both felt the energy was needed and so the lines were a necessary evil. But Borrego Springs residents felt smaller lines, such as phone lines in residential areas, should be put underground.

Little knowledge of the BLM was shown in Borrego Springs, but the Ocotillo Wells residents expressed very anti-BLM sentiments, along with anti-government and anti-Sierra Club feelings.

MARKET AREA FOURTEEN

IMPERIAL COUNTY

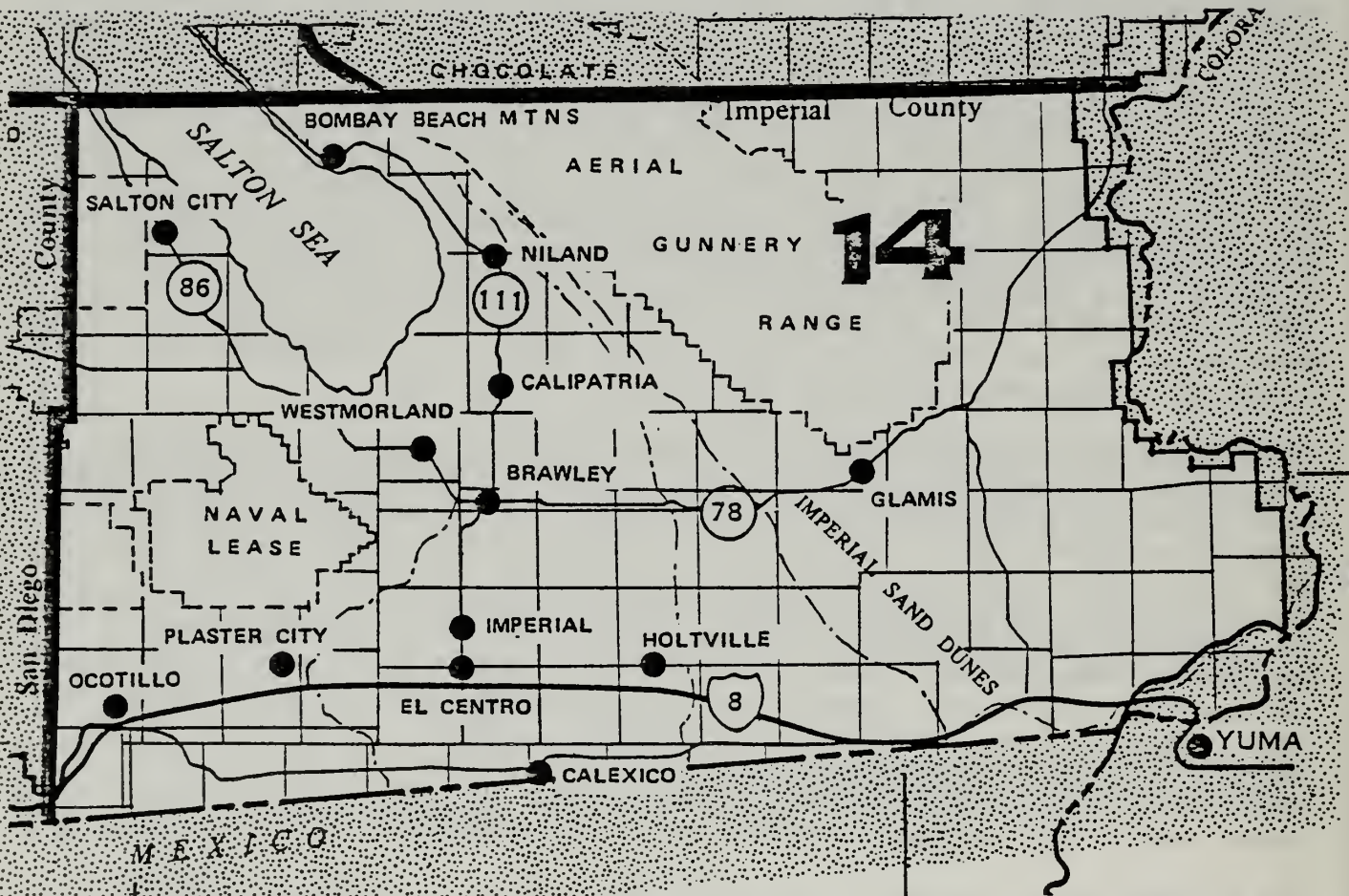
"Why are you even asking? You guys are going to do what you want anyway."

This Market Area consists solely of Imperial County, the only county entirely within the confines of the CDCA. Its 83,000 people live almost exclusively within the half-million acre strip of agricultural lands of the Imperial Valley, running south from the Salton Sea to the Mexican Border. Three cities, lying on the north-south Southern Pacific line bisecting the Valley, contain two-thirds of the County's population, making the area unusually "urban" for one so predominantly agricultural. Named for its location in the Valley, El Centro has 23,000 people. Brawley was the County's largest town until the 1950's; its 14,000 population is nearly matched by Calexico's on the Mexican border. The towns of Holtville, Imperial, Calipatria, Westmorland, Heber, Seely and Niland all lie within the Valley and have populations of less than 5,000. The few communities outside the Valley all have populations of less than 1,000. Palo Verde, in the northeastern corner of the county, is discussed in the report for Market Area 12 because of its ties to that area.

The population is concentrated in the lower third of the Valley, reflecting the origins of agricultural development. Until the 1850's most considered the area inhospitable and worthless. At that time it was discovered that the silt left by an ancient lake would yield rich farmland if irrigated, and the below-sea level elevation of the area made a gravity-flow canal from the Colorado River possible. This project, one of the most dramatic reclamation projects in the world, was completed at the turn of the century by the California Development Company. All towns in the Valley can trace their establishment to the activities of this company and its sister organization, the Imperial Land Company. In 1911 the Imperial Irrigation District, a subdivision of the State of California, assumed the administration of water and power to what is one of the top five farm counties in the country. Its year round growing season and "double-cropping" are rare in the United States.

The economic base is almost exclusively agricultural. A wallboard manufacturing plant at Plaster City is the largest of the county's few industries. A gypsum and a limestone mine near there, and sand and gravel pits mainly around the Salton Sea are the only commercial mining operations. As well as being agricultural service centers, El Centro and Calexico are trade centers for Mexicali shoppers and Mexico-bound tourists. Octotillo, on the western border of the County, and communities around the Salton Sea come alive in the winter months to accomodate migrating "snowbirds". Next to the Sand Hills in the east, Glamis serves its small independent miner population and large numbers of recreationists using the dunes. The primary employment of the area remains agricultural, and results in a high unemployment rate due to its seasonal nature.

The lure of the larger town's retail centers, and the trends of agricultural automation and farm consolidation have reduced the affluence of smaller towns in the valley. Prosperous residences and business establishments are evident in the three largest communities, as well as "Little Mexico" areas of much less affluence. The County has the state's largest share of foreign born population outside San Francisco.



IMPERIAL COUNTY

ISSUES AND CONCERNS

"You BLM people are worried about endangered species of the six legged kind. I'm worried about the two-legged kind--my kids."

The original population of the county emigrated to work farms; there are many descendants of midwestern farmers attracted to the area by the promotional efforts of the Imperial Land Company (which named the valley to dispel its previously foreboding reputation). The agricultural industry also induced a large migration from Mexico. People here extol the virtues of rural living: clean air, the friendliness of neighbors, an unhurried pace of life, a wholesome atmosphere to raise families and proximity to desert recreation. This is coupled with pride in the area's agricultural vitality, and an interest in growth and development of new resources.

The proposed enforcement of the "160 acre limitation" on farm size by the Bureau of Reclamation is viewed as having catastrophic effects. The ill-feeling aroused by this proposal is shared with the BLM, with its recent visibility in the desert. People sense a governmental assault on economic and recreational resources by heavy-handed and remote decision makers.

The Sand Hills area is cited by most Valley residents as a prime recreational area, and by many as the only local area known to be affected by BLM action. The publicity engendered by the closure of a portion of the northern Sand Hills area, as enforcement of the Endangered Species Act, has led some to believe the direction of future management of the desert is closure based on trivial concerns. Not only is there bitterness that plants and insects, often battled by farmers, are being protected, there is also a belief that these species are prevalent in other areas, or dormant in the long cycles of desert growth. Off-road vehicle use was described by many as a traditional area activity in which families seek quiet and solitude, imparting to children driving skills and values of nature and scenic appreciation. There is currently a local awareness of heavy recreational use by San Diego and other out-of-county residents. Crowds of 30,000 to 40,000 in the Sand Hills on some weekends are commonly described; this has resulted in a pattern of changed usage by many local recreationists. Accidents from overcrowding, increased evidence of vandalism and litter, and damage to values of solitude, quietness and beauty have led many to curtail, reschedule or even cease their own activities in the desert. Some attribute this condition to BLM restrictions; some to lack of restrictions, or enforcement of them. There is a consensus that, except for a few areas, the county does not benefit economically from out-of-area recreationists, since the current sophistication of recreational vehicles allows them to import all their weekend supplies. Many believe that the cost of county services in the form of increased law enforcement, search and rescue operations and hospital services outweigh any economic benefits. Yet most concede that these recreationists should be allowed escape from city environments, provided they are patrolled for vandalism and litter offenses. Many local users feel they can avoid the heavy concentration of out-of-area people; access should remain unrestricted for them to enjoy the desert with their special knowledge and they should be trusted to respect it as they have in the past.

This sentiment is not universal. Increasing numbers of people feel that vehicle restrictions and wilderness designations are necessary, although generally not to the extent proposed currently. Many Rockhounds, campers, sightseers, hunters, and hikers, for example, decry indiscriminate ORV use, but feel that some vehicular access is required everywhere to pursue these interests. A modification of the wilderness definition to accommodate the special nature of desert recreation, with its heat and lack of water, is often suggested. The BLM definition of a road is denigrated frequently, as is what many consider a hasty inventory of resources by BLM staff.

The extent of recreational use by local people is difficult to assess. Opinions range from widespread and varied use, to occasional hunting and fishing on non-public lands. Residents of Calexico believe heavy users are concentrated in Brawley. Many farmers and residents of larger towns say they leave the County for non-desert recreational activities. Communities outside the Valley believe Valley people use the desert little.

Other issues of desert usage in the area are power transmission corridors and geothermal development.

The construction and maintenance of geothermal plants is expected to decrease a high unemployment rate and substantially increase county gross income, perhaps exceeding that of agriculture. There is little fear that development would cause environmental problems or damage scenic values.

Proposed powerline corridors arouse much debate. The need for power in urban areas is conceded, but hindrance to town development, the use of water to the detriment of agriculture, and the use of prime farmlands is feared; the county would suffer the attendant burdens of these corridors without direct benefit.

Also, concerns for preservation of unique desert features was occasionally expressed. Among those mentioned were the Yuha Itaglios, the Fossil Shell Fish Beds, and the Crucifixion Thorn area.

Some miners felt evidence of extensive mineralization in wilderness study areas was being ignored by BLM.

CALIPATRIA (pop. 2,170)

*"These roads in the desert wouldn't go away in a thousand years.
BLM can't make them disappear by not putting them on a map."*

Fewer people live in Calipatria than did 25 years ago. Because of automation of agricultural labor and consolidation of smaller farms, fewer farmers and farm workers live in the town and use its services. The population loss trend reversed a few years ago and the town grows at a very slow steady rate. The utility of its retail trade was reduced by the attraction of Brawley's stores, and automobiles enroute south stop less frequently than previously. The town presents a settled, sun-baked aspect. The influence of agriculture is evident in the fields surrounding the town and agricultural service stores.

Residents enjoy hunting and fishing in the nearby Salton Sea, a popular duck hunting club is located near the town. Many professed use of ORV's in the

desert and the attitude towards vehicle restrictions and wilderness designation was generally negative. Those who approved of these felt BLM's proposed wilderness areas were too large and that the BLM definition of a road was faulty. They feel that their own values of preservation would be poorly served if BLM fosters a large and arbitrary wilderness program on a local public that would not respect its definition.

GLAMIS (pop. 50)

"Help the handicapped. Donate a brain to the BLM."

--bumper sticker on sale at Glamis store.

The Glamis general store, located on the eastern border of the Sand Hills on Highway 78, is festooned with dune buggy promotional paraphernalia and photographs of the many vehicle enthusiasts which include the owner and his family, who use this forty mile long area. The complex includes a tavern, a gas station, trailer and vehicle facilities and post office boxes that serve individuals engaged in independent mining activities living in mobile homes scattered in locations some miles from the town.

The easily apparent dislike of BLM here results directly from its actions in the Sand Hills area. As well as deriving a substantial portion of his income from recreationists using the dunes, the owner of the store is a frequent user of the area and his own professed values of preservation are based on observations of the effect of human impact that differ from those of BLM personnel. The sand beetles are not endangered, many plants are dormant until rainfall resuscitates them, and weather impact is greater than, and erases the effect of, human impact. The closure has turned the northern dunes into a "jungle", aesthetically displeasing, and the proposed wilderness area in the south is completely inappropriate. Accidents from overcrowding would occur. The litter in the area is mainly beer bottles, which out-of-area recreationists do not buy (nor does the owner sell in his store) because cans transport more safely in recreational vehicles and do not break and cause tire hazards on the dunes. He believes effective management of desert lands is necessary, but that BLM actions in the dunes are unnecessarily prohibitive.

Other residents concurred with most of these sentiments, believing that weather impact on the desert, such as flash floods, was more damaging than vehicle use. Another issue expressed was the desire for public lands to be leased or sold to residents for home or store sites.

EL CENTRO (pop. 22,660)

*"I don't get out in the desert much--can't stand all that clean air.
I need cigar smoke and whiskey fumes to breathe."*

Although there is no single dominant city as in many counties, certain trends and sustained interest in growth by its residents have made El Centro the

county's largest town. Aptly named, it serves as a government, trade, travel, and shipping center. It draws its lifeblood from the agriculture of the area, but its remoteness from urban areas, and the patronage of Mexicali shoppers, give it a considerable and diverse retail trade. A shopping center, new chain restaurants, motels, and specialty shops are much in evidence. Located here are county government buildings and the executive offices of the Imperial Irrigation District.

As in the other valley cities, the Southern Pacific Railroad line defines neighborhoods. The east side of the tracks are traditionally a "Little Mexico" with shanty housing and earthen yards with few trees. Prosperity is more evident on the west side, residences of "ranch-style" homes are common. The growth rate is the slow steady 2% of many other valley towns.

Opinions about desert usage were more diverse than elsewhere in the county, and somewhat less polarized, reflecting the variety of interests in a larger population area. Many expressed their interests with a sense of accommodating other interests; a man strongly interested in wilderness designation was willing to concede the entire Sand Hills area to recreational vehicle use, provided strong restrictions existed elsewhere, for example.

Opponents of ORV restriction and wilderness designation conceded that small areas of a fragile nature should be preserved, such as the fossil oyster beds and archeological sites. Many described the visitation of the desert in vehicles as a long established family activity in the area and BLM action constituted a threat to family values that could result in youth resorting to crime and drug use. Others finding much value in a designation program, feared that their access to many areas in pursuit of activities such as rockhounding or hiking would be denied because of the stigma of destructive users. Many stated they would rather accept more patrol and regulation of vehicles than be restricted access.

Geothermal development was widely touted as an economic godsend and a much preferred alternative to water-consumptive and environmentally polluting coal-fired and nuclear operations.

Objections to proposed powerline corridors were based on their use of farmlands and proximity to populated areas.

BRAWLEY (pop. 13,900)

"I've visited the northern dunes since I was a child. BLM has taken away something very important to me."

Brawley's preeminent position as the valley's largest town was usurped by El Centro in the 1950's. It remains the residence of many prosperous farmers and both permanent and migratory farm workers. Livestock feeding, storage and shipping are important activities; a great portion of California's beef is fed from the surrounding feed crops, particularly alfalfa, which yields six or seven cuttings annually. The southern Pacific line runs through the town, sided by the Valley's characteristic storage sheds and shipping depots. A

wide main thoroughfare lined with palm trees, "ranch-style" homes and Spanish style city government buildings give Brawley an attractive aspect.

The town suffered lack of revenues when BLM action in the Sand Hills forced a film company to move its location to an area served by Yuma. Many are concerned that the fee charged by BLM for such access is prohibitive, far exceeding the fair market value that the agency is mandated to consider. Those who dealt with state level personnel in negotiating this found them cold and authoritarian. These people feel that BLM suffers from a public relations problem that could damage the implementation of otherwise acceptable programs.

More strong objections to BLM rangers carrying guns were voiced in Brawley than in other valley towns. The most proximate town to the Sand Hills, Brawley has many ORV users who lament the dune closure. And who cite their own observations of the desert environment as contradictory to those of BLM staff. The dune buggy is considered by many to be an aid in desert plant seed transport, rather than a damaging influence.

Powerline corridors are opposed primarily because of water consumption by generating facilities and secondarily because of farmland use.

CALEXICO (pop. 13,200)

*"There are Indian foottrails hundreds of years old out there.
Think about how long these motorcycle trails will last."*

Calexico is an anomaly among the cities of the County because of its proximity to Mexico. Formed at the U.S. entry point of the original Imperial Canal, it served as the tent city of the Imperial Land Company. Directly across the border is Mexicali (the names of the two cities are amalgamations of syllables from Mexico and California), with a population of well over 500,000 and the reason for Calexico's large retail trade activity. Merchants rely on Mexicali trade for most of their gross income. The per capita income of Calexico is higher than that of El Centro, but the city has the lowest average incomes, the youngest population, the most sizable households, and the most foreign-born residents of any city in the County. The town retains the bright flavor of a trade and tourist center, but has the typical reliance on agriculture for primary income.

A proposed powerline corridor runs directly north of the city; residents are very opposed to its use, fearing the town's expansion, already blocked on the south, would be inhibited. Many residents felt that recreational vehicle use of the desert was more prevalent among residents in Brawley, and other towns to the north. Recreation by residents most mentioned was fishing in the canals and travel to coastal cities. Knowledge of proposed wilderness and recreational vehicle area designations was limited, but many had observed damage to the desert and reduced recreational enjoyment by noisy and indiscriminate ORV users. An ORV registration program was suggested as essential to enforcement of any restrictions.

HOLTVILLE (pop. 4,480)

"We'll see a BLM ranger coming long before he sees us."

Holtville, located on Highway 115 about 12 miles east of El Centro, is a residence, shipping and weekday trade center for the eastern part of the valley. The Southern Pacific line veers east from El Centro to serve the area. Farm workers and farmers, many descended from Swiss immigrants, live here and commute to their nearby farms, which are often not on contingent parcels, and an increasing number are retiring in Holtville. The town's businesses are located along the SP tracks; main street trade has suffered from a diminished through traffic caused by the completion of Interstate 8 about five years ago. Residences are older buildings, but well maintained.

Most residents are little convinced of the value of proposed BLM management, and less convinced that their opinions about designated usage will be heeded. The actions of the Desert Advisory Committee seems an expensive front for decisions already made by bureaucrats, and a lack of involvement by local residents in planning processes is explained by this perception of their impotence, as well as their belief that enforcement of recreational restrictions would be ineffective, netting only unwily out-of-area users.

PLASTER CITY (pop. 130)

"The government requires us to keep down the silica level in the air of the plant. During a sand blow it's 50 times that outside."

Plaster City is located about 15 miles west of El Centro on Highway 115, on the west mesa outside of the Valley. Its gypsum facility is one of the few non-agricultural industries in the county and many here feel that its problems are of small concern to county government. A company town, Plaster City has housing for about thirty families located around the domineering physical plant whose activities give the town its name and exclusive employment. No retail services exist here.

Some residents use the desert for recreation; motorcycling and four-wheel drive use was mentioned. The primary issue is the sand blow caused by heavy recreational vehicle use to the west and south. This has become more noticeable in recent years and constitutes a very unpleasant living environment for residents. BLM action to rectify this was strongly requested.

WESTMORLAND (pop. 1,500)

"Some fella from the city asked me if I didn't get lonely here. I said 'I bet I know more people than you do.' "

Westmorland is the entry city to the valley for travelers on Highway 86. For

the same reasons as in Calipatria, it suffered a decline in population, stabilized, and presently is very slowly increasing in population. Its nearness to the Salton Sea gives it seasonal trade to hunters and fishermen, as in Calipatria. The town's condition draws evidence of formerly more prosperous days when farm workers and farmers were more numerous. Today's residents are employed on the nearby farms or in the town's small retail business and enjoy a relaxed and easy pace of life.

As in other valley towns, residents are most concerned about agriculture and local and regional trends that affect the local economy. Prospects of geothermal development are good and people here welcome its incumbent economic benefits. Aware of large tracts of county land already appropriated by the military, people resent restrictions on remaining public lands. Complete desert recreational access and availability for resource exploitations, with the exception of cultural site preservation, is favored by many.

NILAND (pop. 1,400)

"While you're here, why don't you try a mineral bath?"

The town's name is a contraction of "Nile Land", another promotional idea of the Imperial Land Company. Located on Highway 111, it, along with Westmorland on Highway 86, is an entry town to the valley; it borders the agricultural lands and is in sight of the Salton Sea. Its reliance on agriculture is still strong, but diminished in recent years by crop changes and a decreased farm labor force living in the town. Salton Sea recreation and retirement living in the town and the mobile home communities of Bombay Beach and Fountain of Youth a few miles north are significant economic forces. A summer lethargy is dissipated in October by "Snowbirds" and recreationists visiting "Slab City", the Salton Sea, and nearby mineral baths. A few stores, including one selling sporting goods, are serving hunting and fishing sportsmen, are located on Highway 111, but the town's retail business generally shows the lack of vitality that easy access to El Centro and Brawley shopping areas has caused in other valley towns. Many residences here are well-tended mobile homes owned by retirees.

The spectre of desert management does not loom large here. Many feel removed from the main impact of proposed measures, but share with many valley residents the common foreboding about restricted use by residents and a possible decrease in tourist revenues. The dune closure is infamous and considered representative of high-handed BLM technique. Concern for maintenance of the area's image as an open, pleasant retirement site was expressed often.

IMPERIAL (pop. 3,210)

"Yes, BLM rangers should have guns. All the idiots out there have guns."

This city was the valley's first city and original boom town. Only three miles north of El Centro, Imperial has been inhibited in its growth by that city's

proximity. It shares many of El Centro's county responsibilities; it is the location of the operating headquarters of the Imperial Irrigation District, the County's airport and fairgrounds. Buildings for feed and seed and farm implement companies are evidence of employment outside of government services. Many of its residents commute to work in El Centro and Brawley, and these towns provide many of Imperial's workers.

Employees of the IID would not comment on the powerline corridor issue because of that agency's involvement with these projects. Others expressed the belief that powerlines were an obtrusive, damaging influence to agriculture and animal habitats. Hunters hoped the BLM plan would provide protection for the habitats of game animals. Approval of wilderness designation and vehicle restrictions was given, but fears about a disturbance of an excellent child-rearing environment if traditional access to the desert is curtailed was often expressed. BLM closure of the dunes resulted, many believe, in accidents from overcrowding and a degraded recreational quality. Geothermal development is uniformly applauded.

OCOTILLO (pop. 300-500)

"You should watch that road on a Friday afternoon--give you a damn neck cramp."

Ocotillo is at the western border of the County, on Highway 78 and Interstate 8, as it descends onto the valley floor. Residents of this small retirement community have a vast vista of the west mesa and Yuma Desert, and of the east bound traffic on the County's main artery from San Diego. Two large gas stations are located here. Residents not employed at the cafe, post office, fire station and other services here are mainly retired and many are "Snowbirds" who live here only in the winter months. Housing here and at the nearby settlement of "No Mirage" is primarily mobile homes on treeless, grassless lots. Rockhounding and desert sightseeing are popular pastimes.

Resident concur with the general opinion that recreationists from the coast, who are observed in a constant stream on Interstate 8 on weekends, are traveling in self-contained vehicles and contribute little to County economy. Examples of wanton misuse of local terrain by motorcyclists and other vehicle users are described by many; dust clouds and scarred desert "varnish" are noted. While some control of this activity is much claimed by residents, many are wary of vehicle restrictions that would curtail their own avid desert recreational use; many spend their retirement time exploring geological, cultural and other desert resources. BLM control is considered as intrusive but unfortunately necessary to deal with vandals. Wilderness study areas are too large and exclusive and should be scaled down to protect cultural sites only. Residents were disturbed that BLM had placed sites for vehicle competitive events, which cause sandblows, in an area nearby. They generally approved of a proposed BLM Information Station in Ocotillo.

THE SALTON SEA RESORTS (pop. 3,000)

"When I retired, I decided to come down here so I could play and relax."

There are several small resort areas that line the Salton Sea, the largest of which are Bombay Beach and Salton City. Both settlements have been growing rapidly in recent years, with populations averaging over a thousand in season. The season for tourist immigration differs depending upon activity. Some tourists come down in the summer to fish, swim and water ski. Many others arrive from northern California during the winter months to enjoy the warmer climate, the quiet and clean air.

The year round residents are for the most part retired, and the job market is limited to a few tourist services. Amenities are few and all supplies and services are purchased at towns south in the Brawley area, or northward in the Mecca area.

A large portion of these Salton Sea residents are ORV users who enjoy driving on nearby trails and roads. Most felt more land in the desert should be opened to ORV use, rather than more being closed to such recreation. Concern for preserving the desert was generally limited to protecting small areas of historical value.

One special problem was mentioned by Bombay Beach residents. The town's streets are unpaved, and often young bike riders prefer using in-town roads to going outside town for riding. These riders cause a great deal of noise and bad t.v. reception, leaving many residents upset.

Only one episode of vandalism was recounted by area residents. An unknown dune buggy rider rode off the trail to reach the site of a rare pair of nesting hawks; he then shot and killed both birds. The residents of Bombay Beach were disgusted at such pointless destruction and felt control of the few bad ORV users was needed but that it was unfair to punish all ORV users with strict regulations.

Little concern was shown about desert transmission lines, and knowledge or opinions about desert grazing and mining were rare.

Appendix A

METHODOLOGY

Staff from the planning department of DPS made face-to-face contact with residents in every incorporated community of the desert, and most unincorporated communities, including some mines and ranches with less than 10 people. A total of 582 desert residents were contacted. (Two Market Areas were omitted because of a lack of permanent population: Market Area Two, Death Valley National Monument; and Market Area Four, Fort Irwin and the Mojave B Range of China Lake Naval Weapons Center.)

The approach in rural areas was to talk to merchants, postmasters and members of typical local occupation groups, who would often volunteer spokesmen familiar with local values. Occasionally local BLM offices recommended knowledgeable people in their areas.

In urban areas, while continuing the mode of random encounters, effort was made to contact those able to represent both general community values and specific group interests. Staff met with city and county officials, including city managers, members of planning, parks and recreation, and public works departments, and police and fire department officials. In addition, staff talked to representatives of occupational groups, service organizations, religious organizations, and desert users groups. Newspaper editors, chamber of commerce managers, and college faculty were often approached.

The length of time spent in an area and the number of people talked to was not necessarily proportionate to the population of the community. A subjective, well-defined picture of the values of an individual community was sought. Rural areas and small towns consequently received closer scrutiny than a desert-wide random sampling method would normally permit.

Conversations took place in public places, like post offices, in the resident's place of work, or at his home. Talks were open-ended, informal and unstructured, ranging both in topic discussed and duration (5-100 minutes).

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